

**INSTITUTIONAL AND ORGANISATION
ANALYSIS OF**

**BRAC
EDUCATION PROGRAMME**
(in the framework of BEP PHASE IV, 2004-2009)



August 24 - September 13, 2003

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ADAB	Association of NGO's in Bangladesh
ADC	Adolescent Development Centre (previously Kishori Kendro)
ADP	Adolescent Development Programme
AKF	Aga Khan Foundation
AL	Adolescent Leader
AM	Adolescent Monitor
AM	Audit and Monitoring Division (at BRAC head office)
AMR	Annual Monitoring Review
APON	Adolescent Peer Organised Network
BDP	BRAC Development Programme
BEP	BRAC Education Programme
BEOC	Basic Education for Older Children
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
BTD	BRAC Training Division
BUIED	BRAC University Institute of Education and Development
CAMPE	Campaign for Popular Education
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CDU	Capacity Development Unit
CE	Continuing Education
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CLC	Community Learning Centre
DAC-OESO	Development Assistance Committee (Head quarters in Paris)
DED	Deputy Executive Director
DFID	Directorate For International Development
DLO	Donor Liaison Office
DNFE	Directorate of Non-Formal Education
DPE	Directorate of Primary Education
EC	European Commission
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ED	Executive Director
EDU	Education Development Unit
EFA	Education for All
ESP	Education Support Programme
FA	Finance and Accounts Division (at BRAC head office)
FN	Federation of NGO's
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoB	Government of Bangladesh
GPS	Government Primary School
GPU	GoB Partnership Unit
HDI	Human Development Index
HKI	Helen Keller International
HRM	Human Resource Management
HT	Head Teacher
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IOA	Institutional and Organisation Analysis
IOM	Integrated Organisation Model
i-PRSP	Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
KfW	German Development Bank

KK	Kishori Kendro (now Adolescent Development Centre)
KS	Kishori Supervisor
KS-PP	Kishori Supervisor – Pre-Primary
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MIS	Management Information System
MoPME	Ministry of Primary and Mass Education
MT	Master Trainer
MTR	Mid Term Review
NCTB	National Curriculum and Textbook Board
NEP	National Education Policy
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NFPE	Non-Formal Primary Education
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NNCC	National NGO Co-ordination Committee
NOVIB	Netherlands Organisation for International Development Co-operation
NPA	National Plan of Action "Education for All"
OST	Open Space Technology
PACE	Post-primary, Adolescent and Continuous Education
PE	Peer Educator
PEDP	Primary Education Development Programme
PO	Programme Organiser
PP	Pre-primary
PRIME	Primary Initiatives in Mainstreaming Education
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
QAS	Quality Assurance Specialist
RC	Reading Centre
RED	Research and Evaluation Division
RM	Regional Manager
RNE	Royal Netherlands Embassy
SAT	Standardised Achievement Test
SMC	School Management Committee
SS	Secondary School
SSC	Secondary School Certificate
TARC	BRAC Regional Training Center
ToR	Terms of Reference
TiC	Team-in-Charge
TTC	Teacher Training College
UEO	Upazila Education Officer
UL	Union Library
URC	Upazila Resource Centre

Acknowledgement

Appraising a large, evidently relevant and flourishing programme like BRAC's Education Programme is at once a sobering, moving and rewarding experience. Yet to the organisation under scrutiny such an exercise often implies considerable 'harassment', in the sense that the appraisal team draws a lot of time and attention from the stakeholders away from day-to-day tasks and activities. The IOA-team is thankful and impressed by the time and supported extended by people throughout and around BEP.

First and foremost the IOA-team particularly wishes to express our gratitude to Erum Marian and Shafiqul Islam. We thank them for their time and great openness in introducing us to BRAC, discussing many topics at length and providing extensive feedback on both the main lines as well as the details of our preliminary findings, besides providing excellent logistical support and hospitality. Without their exceptional engagement it would not have been possible to realise this mission in the short time given.

We also thank Ariful Islam for joining us on our two field visits, sharing a width and depth of experience that flows more abundant when on tour together. Similarly we thank Monwer Hossain for accompanying and introducing us to government partners, and Shunil for sharing facts and views on the collaboration with NGO as a means to provide education. Finally we wish to thank Fazlul Hoque firstly for his assistance in the Open Space workshops, but moreover for his infectious enthusiasm in discussing human resource development issues. We are also grateful for the privilege of fruitful meetings with Aminul Alan, Abdul-Muyeed Chowdhury, and Mr. Abed.

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Dhanyabaad and Salam alaikum,

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MDF Training & Consultancy
Dhaka/Ede, September, 2003



Executive Summary

Introduction

This Institutional and Organisation Analysis (IOA) addresses to capacity and organisational arrangements of BRAC Education Programme (BEP) to achieve its mission, strategy and goals. It also addresses the internal and external pre-conditions to be met. The scope of this report thus is not only on BEP, but also the organisation of BRAC as a whole and the external environment in which it operates.

This IOA-mission was realised in August/September 2003 and complements the appraisal mission of BEP phase IV, which focussed on programmatic aspects of the BEP for 2004-2009 and that was realised shortly before the IOA mission. Both reports should be read together to enable comprehension of all issues.

Many earlier appraisal and review missions provided the scope for this IOA-mission. Central themes brought forward by these earlier missions are:

- Continuous quality-improvement in the programmes of BEP;
- Long-term strategic planning and increased coherence between the different programme components;
- Better use and access to information on programmes and improvement of capacity for interpretation for long-term policy and planning;
- Find a better balance between implementation and strategy;
- Need for more co-ordination in an increasingly complex organisation;
- Need for more recognition by other stakeholders of the BEP educational models.

These themes present the continuous challenges of BEP that will remain relevant for the future as well. In this analysis all these themes are presented with the attempt to take the implications further and provide a longer-term future scope.

To enable better learning from the sequence of missions and reports a stronger focus on these main themes is recommended.

Analysis

The BRAC Education Programme operates in a context of persistent and extreme poverty in Bangladesh. This poverty has not only a socio-economic dimension, but also human, security, social-cultural and political aspects. BRAC as a whole addresses all these aspects and BEP targets large-scale interventions to well defined target-groups, especially women and children to achieve sustainable and long-term impact in pro-poor development and capacity building. The outreach of BEP to approximately 1.8 million poor people in Bangladesh is extremely big and makes it one of the largest NGO-interventions in the world.

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2. Awareness building (parents, communities), participation is considered to be important for all changes that are induced in communities. Involvement and building ownership are key words to make initiatives in communities a success. Creation of leadership practices, facilitating that community members take their responsibilities, is crucial for sustainable development.
3. In contrast to the grassroots workshop, the ESP-programme was highly valued and considered to be a very relevant programme. Reported irregularities in the prioritising (voting) about this components illustrate differing views and interests that need to be reconciled. The (positive and critical) attention is probably due to the fact that at managerial level there is a higher awareness on the importance of networking, whereas the immediate interest at grassroots level is more directed to direct local benefit.

4. Conclusions

General conclusions are presented here. For specific recommendations one is referred to the original Open Space session reports, which contain valuable detailed information and suggestions in addition to the summary of outcomes presented above.

Expansion of programs

The success of BEP is evident in the expressed desire to further expand activities. All components were praised and suggested to be further rolled out. Some stood out for specific reasons:

1. The libraries were highly prioritized in both workshops. The special social and intermediate function they play in the communities is of such great value that their existence is greatly appreciated. While community awareness building is still of great importance, the libraries have a key a key-role in community development.
2. The secondary schools were highly prioritized in both workshops, including the need to address the smooth transition from primary to secondary school. The need is recognized to invest a lot in improving secondary education, such as school management, subject content (especially English, math and science), materials and facilities.

Cooperation with GoB

BRAC stakeholders wish to see that the relationship with GoB is intensified. The general impression is that both the expansions of current initiatives as well as their sustainability are in danger. The need to cooperate with government is felt and realized at grassroots level as well as on managerial level. Many, if not most, of the multi-stakeholder workgroups mentioned the need and the will to cooperate with GoB.

This phase seems to be a critical period, wherein the role of the donors is going to be of central importance, but wherein BRAC itself will have to reflect on its vision, the scenarios it may be faced with and the immediate implementation of sustainable development strategies for BEP.

Management of BEP

Although BEP seems to be well managed, a couple of issues deserve the attention of BRAC staff. First, there seems to be a need to clarify hierarchies and responsibilities at field level staff. It is felt that the current system results in overlap of responsibilities and therefore confusion in the decision-making processes. Also, stronger participation in decision-making processes was suggested. Second, some HRM processes need to be revisited. Especially the transparency of performance appraisals (which already improved recently) and the link to training and (career) development need reviewing. Salaries are generally perceived as low.

Awareness and capacity building

As a red line, the binding factor for successful implementation of any component is the raising of awareness of communities and those indirectly involved in the programme, as well as capacity building for those directly involved in implementation. As these two components are so crucial, BRAC might want to research on its approaches and identify its success factors, to see structurally build on its experience. Open Space might be a new tool to be used.

The continuous strengthening of capacity, both in subject/content and in managerial skills is imperative to sustain the quality of education.

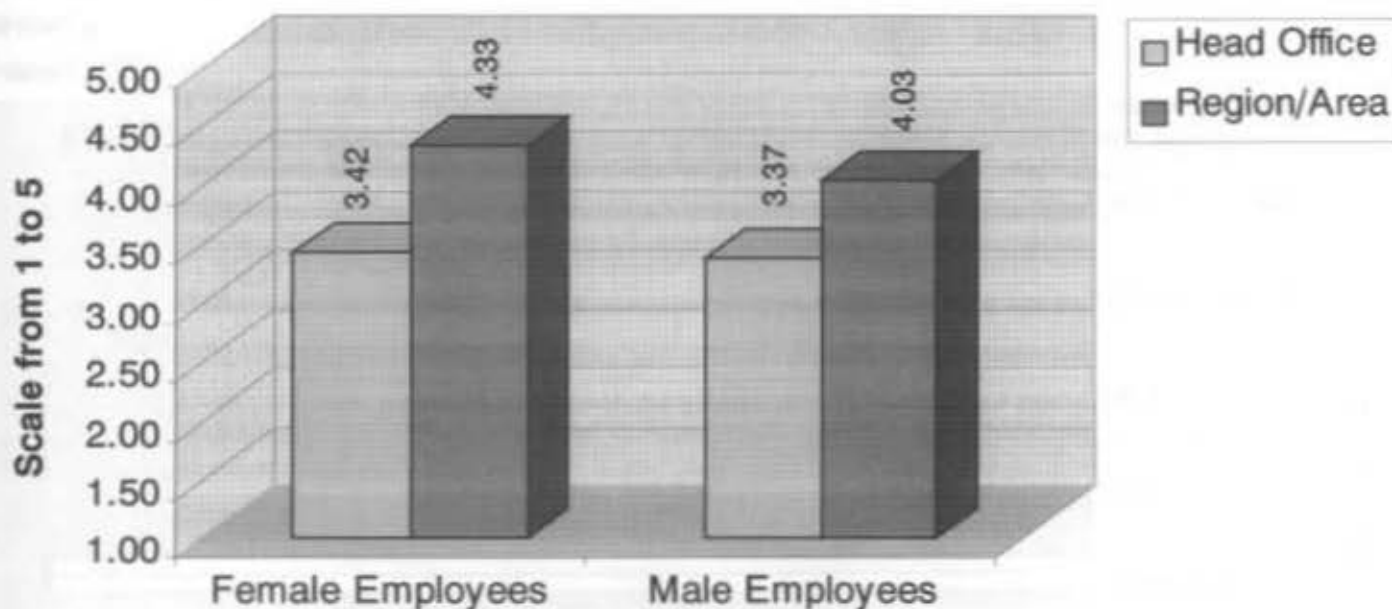
Open Space

At both events participants greatly appreciated the methodology. Although it is simple and easy to adapt, several books have been written and researches been done about its principles. For the purpose of the mission, it was used to generate reflections of the "BRAC-BEP system", but it is a useful tool for interactive and participative learning, exchanging of ideas and visions, and has been used for a multitude of purposes. It could well be applied in communities to open up discussions, generate ownerships, build awareness and induce active participation.

To fully benefit from Open Space Technology as a participatory reflection and planning method, as BRAC considers, it may be worthwhile for staff of (particularly) the training division to study some of the principles further. We believe, just as an example, that it would not be valuable, as was suggested, to restrict voting rules during the prioritisation to 'maximum one vote per subject'. This would reduce some tension, but the voting would no longer reflect the general perception of 'the system'. Subsequently the interpretation of the voting outcome (What does it mean and how should it impact planning?) should be well understood.

Annex 5: results questionnaires on staff-motivation

Overall employee motivation and satisfaction



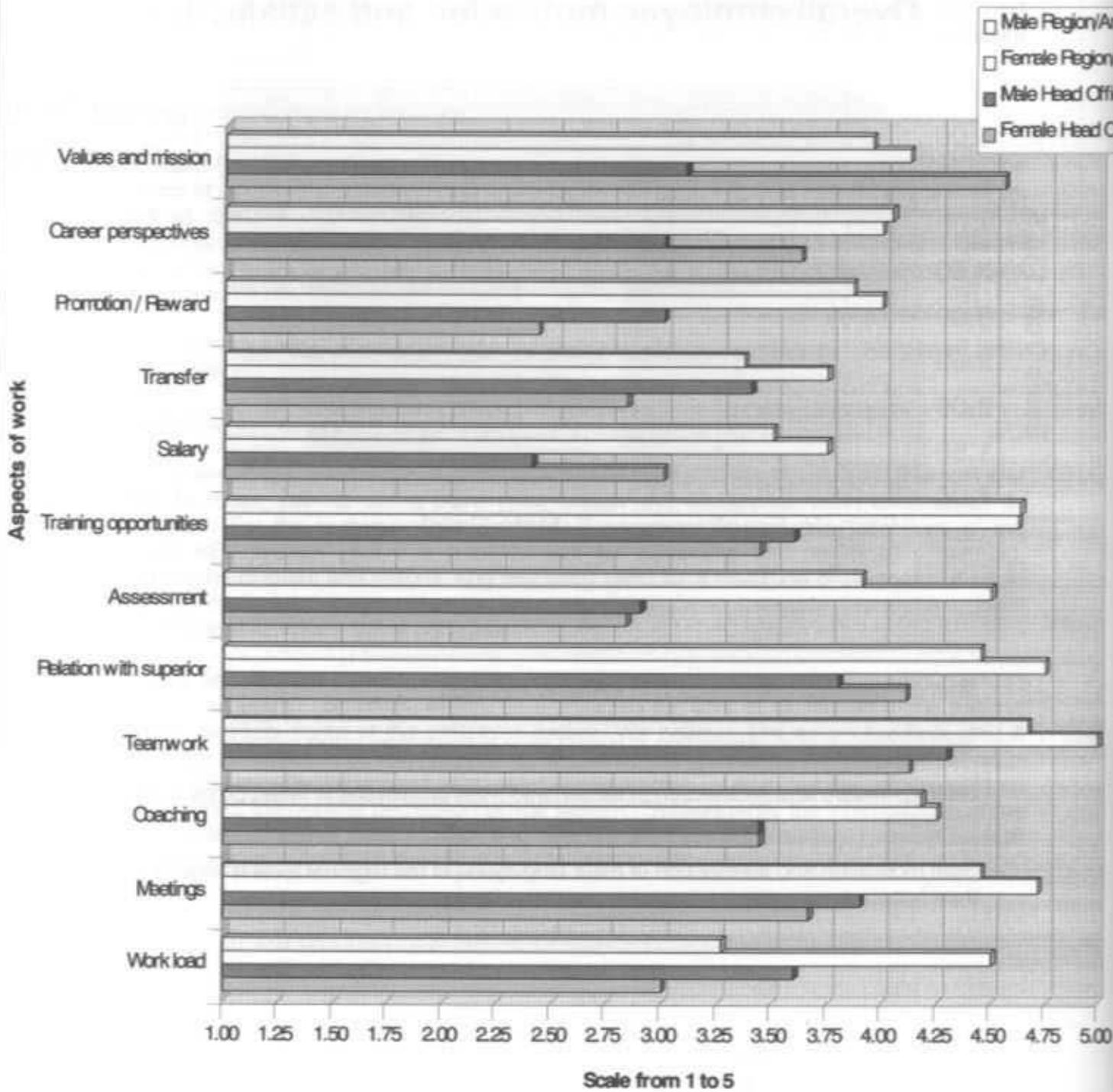
Staff motivation and satisfaction in BRAC is very high

Staff motivation and satisfaction in Head Office is lower than in the regions

Staff motivation and satisfaction of female and male employees in Head Office is almost the same

Staff motivation and satisfaction of male employees at the regional level is slightly lower than female employees

Employee motivation and satisfaction



Most motivating and satisfying factors:

- Relations with superior
- Teamwork

Least motivating and satisfying factors:

- Transfer policies
- Salary

Significant differences between male and female employees:

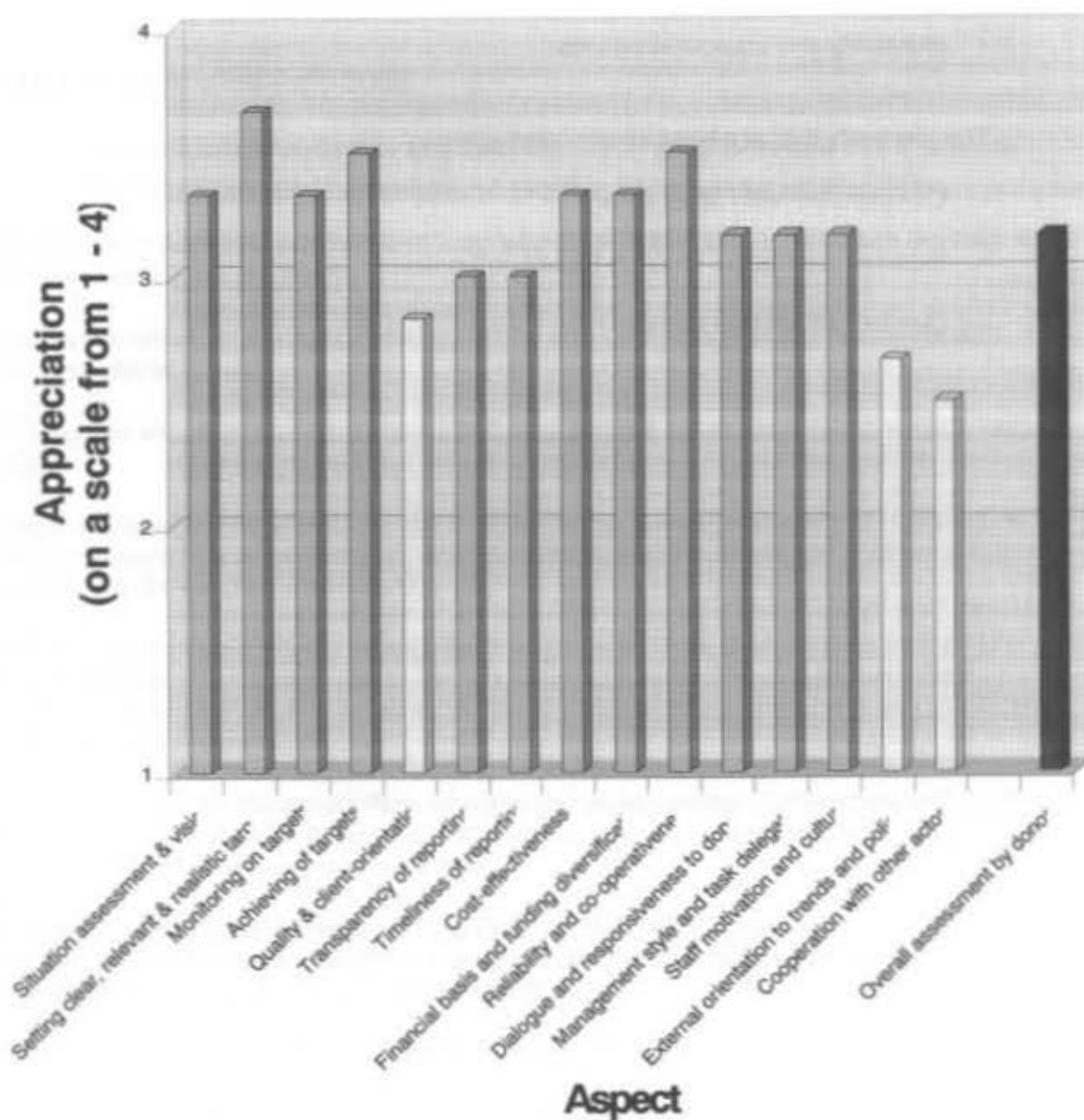
- Female employees are more satisfied with the values and mission and with salary (male employees at the head office are especially less motivated by values and mission)
- Female employees are slightly less satisfied with training opportunities

Significant differences between Head Office and Regions:

- On almost all aspects motivation and satisfaction at the head office is lower
- Especially on promotion and reward, salary and assessment the employees at the head office are less satisfied and have an overall score of less than 50%

Annex 6: Results questionnaires with donors

Average donor appreciation of BRACs performance



Donors general appreciation of BRAC is scoring above the average score of 3. In the questionnaire this was indicated with higher than average. Only three aspects were characterised as lower than average.

The elements of BRAC that are most appreciated are:

- Setting clear and relevant targets
- Achieving of targets
- Reliability and co-operativeness

The elements that are least appreciated are:

- Co-operation with other actors
- External orientation towards trends and policies
- Quality and client-orientation

Annex 7: List of related recommendations of four earlier missions

The list presented in this annex presents some of the recommendations of earlier missions and reviews. The IOA appraisal team has focussed on those recommendations that are directly relevant for the scope of the institutional and organisational analysis of the BRAC/BEP programme. The great many of recommendations related to programmatic issues are not in this overview, unless they are related to important issues related to the mission and strategy of BRAC.

1. AMM recommendations 2002

BRAC should evaluate its emerging MIS system early in 2003 to ensure that it remains strongly linked to management and does not develop into an unwieldy structure.

BRAC thinks that MIS system requires improvements. A consultant has been working with BEP MIS to serve this purpose.

Seize opportunities for linkages between BRAC and GoB in continuing education and adolescent development

BRAC agrees with the recommendation and may find out some ways to work jointly with the GoB

An organisational review should be made of the higher levels (managers and above) of PRIME to ensure that administration, communication and the exchange of ideas is not impeded by a dis-functional structure.

PRIME is a pilot intervention to strengthen linkages with GoB. BRAC thinks that such a management structure is required to carry out the intervention intensively with local government. However, BEP may consider the recommendation in future drawing from the lessons learnt in Phase III.

BRAC should explore the possibilities of achieving wide-ranging partnerships with GoB in specific geographical areas to ensure that all children in that area complete primary education and achieve basic competencies.

BEP has already started working with the GoB through PRIME initiatives. BRAC agrees with the proposal, but developing wide ranging partnership requires mutual understanding and time. Donor agencies can play a role in this regard.

Arrange for Grade V students to compete for scholarships before entry into high school.

BRAC thinks it is a good proposal. BEP along with donor partners should advocate for this with GoB. BEP has submitted a letter to the Secretary of MOPME (formerly known as PMED) to allow students completing grade V of NFPE schools to appear for the

scholarship examination. The letter was sent on 6.01.03 and BRAC (at september 2003) has received a positive response.

Recognised qualifications for BRAC teachers should be addressed in consultation with the GoB.

BRAC partially agrees with this proposal. Most of the BEP teachers are GoB recognized SSC level certificate holders. Those who are not being encouraged by BEP to take part in public exams. For the information 72% of the existing teachers are SSC holders.

Consider the possibility of a BRAC representative being invited to join the PEDP Steering Committee and, in turn, a senior GoB officer participating in the BEP committee.

BRAC completely agrees with the proposal but the GoB needs to accept the suggestion.

Expand the PRIME initiative, including the establishment and operation of preprimary schools in an increased number of primary school catchment areas.

This has been indicated in the Project Proposal 2004 -2009, p. 49.

Underwrite a number of GoB-BRAC action research initiatives aimed at enabling all children in a specific geographical area satisfactorily to completed primary education.

This has been indicated under new initiatives in Project Proposal 2004-2009

2. MTR 2001:

On BEP and BRAC common mission:

Organise high level workshops on BRAC mission and the degree in which this mission is translated in overall BRAC strategies.

A high level workshop has taken place in January 2002. BRAC also organised a strategic workshop with donors in January 2003.

Identify components in which BEP is benefiting from support of and cooperation with other programs such as BDP. In how far are approaches standardized and can they be mutually reinforcing.

BRAC indicated it does already do this. However the last part of this recommendation was not followed up.

Need for PMIS complementing and linked to the present MIS. Ajust approach to monitoring related to planning at different levels (two recommendations combined).

BRAC indicated this is probably to costly. However, the idea behind this recommendation to ensure more long term monitoring related to original planning in some way disapeared from the scene.

Longer term planning is needed

BRAC agrees with this, but does confirm it is happy with the present planning systems.

On strengthening capacity for utilisation and interpretation of MIS and monitoring data:

Start capacity building for data interpretation by distilling trends and providing uses interpretations to the tables produces.

BRAC agreed with this and indicated it would start with piloting interpretation capacity building in 2002.

On piloting towards mainstreaming:

Prepare designs of pilots including criteria for mainstreaming

This was agreed by BRAC and indicated it would start the design of criteria for pilots in 2002 and 2003-09-05

On focus within Education Quality drive:

The (SWOT) analysis is to come to conclusions related to areas to focus on, where external expertise should be called upon and where can be build upon existing capacities

BRAC indicated that this analysis will identify and suggest areas needing more focus, including external expertise, partnerships etc.

On need for staff development for supervisory structure:

Prepare a systematic staff development plan for supervisory staff

BRAC indicated that workshops were held on this issue and that it tries to identify the weak areas where capacity building would be required.

3. ESP- review mission (dates unknown)

IOA-appraisal team doesn't know the level of acceptance of the recommendations of this mission.

On partner NGOs:

ESP's partner NGOs have changed. They now have larger and wider capacity & potential. There is a need to clarify ESP's long-term planning vision

There is a need to revise and expand the selection criteria for partner NGOs. At the same time the selection process could be formalised with the development of an assessment tool.

The policy environment in which BEP operates is complex and characterised by a slowly but gradually increasing dialogue with the Government of Bangladesh (GoB), especially with the two Ministries of Education and the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

The National Education Policy and the sub-sector plans for primary education provide little space for participation of the NGO-sector in delivering cost-effective primary education. The NGO's at present account for 8 % of this delivery, BEP taking the lion share of 6%. The slowly increasing recognition by the GoB of the capacity of NGO's in basic education mainly addresses the complementary and alternative (so called 'non-formal') actions directed to pre-primary, post-primary children, adolescents and adult education. The core-programme of BEP to deliver primary education to 1.1 million children until present receives remarkably little attention until date.

Many other policy developments and processes at the national level are equally relevant to BEP: the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (i-PRSP) of the GoB; the process of decentralisation; the process of public sector reform. An important threat to the positive outcomes of these processes is the persistent and widespread corruption in the country. The dialogue between the GoB and NGO's has reached an impasse and this has deeply divided the NGO community. In spite of recent progress with the founding of the Federation of NGO's, the NGO-community remains divided and dialogue only proceeds slowly.

Increasing efforts in advocacy and more linkages between different policy-aspects are needed. BRAC/BEP seems not very affected by the crisis in NGO-GoB and NGO-NGO dialogue, but still needs to bring its advocacy efforts at a higher level. Co-operation and co-ordination with other NGO's and networks such as CAMPE are crucial to break out of the present impasse.

The BRAC Education programme has good relations with its main stakeholders, the most important being the target-groups, mainly children and women. The relations with local governments and government officials at the local level have reached a high level of understanding, recognition and co-operation. Also the relations with the donors, organised in a Donor-Consortium, are very good. To accelerate the dialogue with the central government, there is great leverage to be found in local governments and government officials at the local level. The donors also play (and need to continue to play) a role as brokers to facilitate this dialogue.

BEP occupies an important place within the overall strategy and structure of BRAC. BEP is well integrated and its contribution to the mission of BRAC is eminent and highly valued. This recognition is important in the light of the quest for financial sustainability of BRAC as a whole. On the longer-term this is reflected in the commitment of BRAC to raise (out of income-generating activities of BRAC) 50% of the budget of BEP, which is until now, almost completely dependent on external donor-contributions.

BEP has recently defined a new long-term vision. This vision states that BEP wants to become a network of resource centres on education at the regional and national level. This vision on the longer-term (20-25 years) will significantly change the present characteristics of BEP, mainly focussing on implementation of educational programmes. This vision still needs further elaboration and translation in strategies and has to be shared within BEP and BRAC and with external stakeholders, especially the GoB. This will require significant time and effort.

Some programmes of BEP (e.g. GPU, ESP) are already directed towards this new direction. The elaboration of strategies in these programmes requires continuous attention and need an overall strategy that ensures coherence and complementarity of these programmes.

Location of ESP schools is driven by NGO community rather than by strategic concerns of BRAC. There is a need to carry out school mapping of BEP & ESP schools.

Need a formal system to identify the capacity of partner NGOs and a formal assessment of NGOs at the end of each 3-year cycle has to be made.

Need to phase out those NGOs who have acquired a degree of financial sustainability. Ensure that ESP staff have a clear understanding of sustainability and how it should be built into schools. Examine options for withdrawing financial support (E.g. Raising funds through donors, communities, public funds)

On level of support to schools & communities:

The replication of BEP model through partner NGOs should continue.

On management capacity & systems

Endorsement of the placement of ESP with the BEP under DED II and the DED should take a proactive role in identifying areas for collaboration between ESP and other units. Inclusion on ESP in key processes of planning, setting policy, systems for implementation and quality assurance as well as critical consultative for a.

Key policy decisions required to determine what kind of NGO ESP should support, and how the programme seeks to contribute to the national EFA objective.

Need of long-term planning to optimise benefits of ESP and attract donor support.

On linkage & comparison of models

Need to institutionalise the level of cooperation and collaboration among the various divisions and units in the wider education programme. Take a proactive role in identifying areas for collaboration required by ESP from other units and align structure and processes in the education programme to enable inclusion of ESP in the key processes

Beneficial to have more sharing of experiences and lessons learnt to assist in expanding linkages with GOB and other NGOs. Explore the possibility of assisting GOB in developing a strategic plan where NGOs will play the role of implementers and the GOB will play the supporting role as supervisors and monitors.

4. Human Resources Consultancy report, MTE group, April 2002:

Reorganize the HR functions and Rename the HR Department and the Training Division

Considering the credibility of BRAC Training Division both inside and outside BRAC, it is necessary to keep the name remain same. However, the division is implementing the recommended functions. The Human Resource Development department will be renamed as HR department. The HR Department is given responsibility to develop participatory performance appraisal system and improve staff selection process. Special attention is

given to attract professional staff through advertisement, salary package and other incentives.

Develop and implement a performance/competency based needs identification system

BRAC Training Division is piloting the competency based training needs identification system. Gradually it will be implemented to other programs of BRAC where the group analysis will be done to identify the needs based on required job competency.

Upgrade BRAC's recruitment process to attract better quality candidates and gain increased organizational efficiencies.

BRAC agrees to implement the recommendations for facilitating electronic scanning of printed or written data on a job application form into a formal database. BRAC is currently using web page for staff recruitment.

Develop and implement organizational, departmental and individual training plan

Once the performance appraisal form and competency profiles are finalized, the individual training plan will be prepared. However, the organizational and departmental training plan is being done on regular basis

Improve BRAC's internal communications

BRAC agrees in principle to have intranet capability within BRAC. As a part of this communication process, BRAC installed internet connections, fax among the Regional Offices of BDP and TARCs. BRAC Local Representatives organize experience-sharing discussion among different programs of BRAC at the field level to give a broader picture of BRAC. At the head office level program wise focal points is in the process of identify for smooth coordination.

Observation by IOA Appraisal-team 2003:

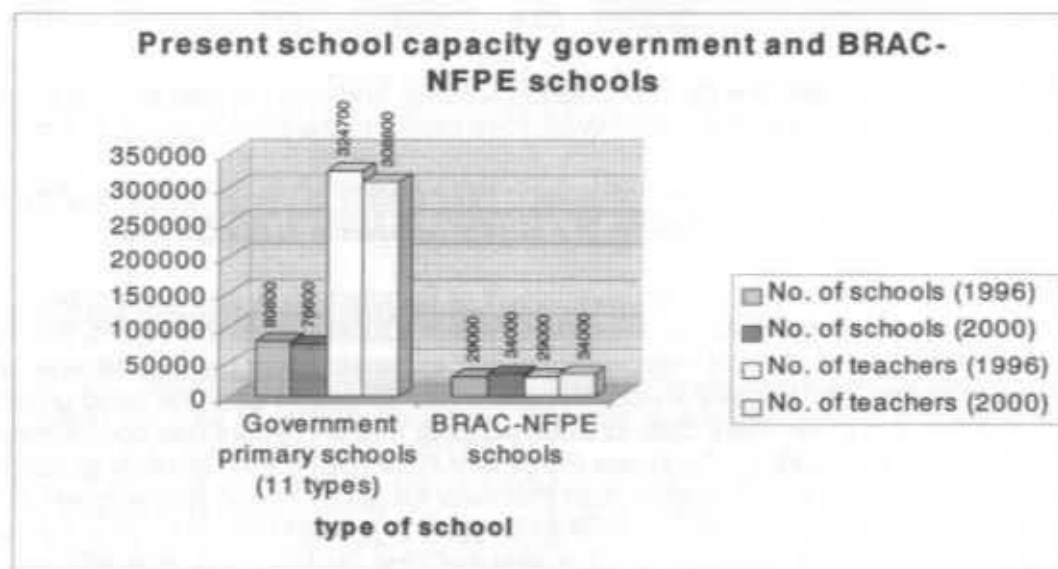
Many of the recommendations in this report in fact were being implemented by BRAC or at least already included in future planning.

Annex 8: Future Scenarios, relevant for the future of BEP

Access to Primary Education

Access to and quality of primary education constitutes one of the mayor debates in Bangladesh. Many reports and analyses on the primary and secondary education system show that both in terms of access to education and of the quality of the education available the situation is far from favourable.

Table 1: Supply of primary education in Bangladesh



Source: JBIC Sector Study: Bangladesh Education Sector, 2002 (excluding primary education supplied by other NGO's (Proshika and others), that account for approximately 2%).

It is widely recognised that the Education For All (EFA) goal for 2015 in Bangladesh is not realistic. In the national plan of action (NPA)II of Education for All (2002-2015) we can read that *"Bangladesh has made a tremendous progress in achieving the goals set for 2000 in the NPA. The enrolment increased by more than 5 million children and exceeded the GER target of 95%. The completion rate has increased to 65% in 2000 and dropout rate came down from 80% to 30%. The boy-girl rate is now at par in relation to their number in the population. However, the attendance rate is yet to go beyond 60% and the quality of primary education has hardly improved. The poor quality has become the weakest point of the entire primary education system. It being the foundation of all education the poor quality affects adversely the entire superstructure of education in the country. Adult literacy has progressed from 35% in 1991 to 65% in 2001."* (NPA II, MPMED, 2002).

The independent Education Watch Studies of 2001 and 2002 show even more worrying figures on availability and quality of primary education. Dropout rates in the formal education system according to Education Watch are around 35%. The report of 2002, specially focused on literacy, present the image of a over the years very persistent illiteracy of around 60%.

Table 2: Literacy in Bangladesh (Education Watch National Literacy surveys, 2001, 2002)

	1993	1998	2002		
	(children)	(children)	(11 years and above)	Initial	Advanced
Bangladesh	39.8	42.5	41.4	21.0	20.4
Females	35.7	40.8	35.6	22.3	13.3
Males	43.4	44.2	47.6	18.5	28.1
Rural	38.6	38.8	37.2	20.8	16.6
Urban	66.4	58.3	63.6	23.1	40.5

Comparing these data with trends in population surveys and international studies show that the figures presented by Education Watch are closer to the truth than the optimistic estimate in the NPA II.

These figures underscore the earlier observation that quality of the education system is not enough to reach sustainable figures of a literate population in Bangladesh.

The recent PEDP II document of the Government of Bangladesh is also quite critical about the performance in the formal education system. Quoting from this report, we can conclude that in spite of obvious improvements and expansion over the last decade "as of 2001 it seemed that total primary school enrolment had stabilized after the rapid growth of the 80s and 90s, but preliminary data for 2002 suggest that enrolment has declined by 1.5% as compared with 2001. The Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) rose steadily to reach 97.5% in 2001 and may slightly higher than that level for girls. Official data suggest an overall Net Enrolment Rate (NER) of about 81%, but it is possibly closer to 75% for the formal sector. ... The high rate of dropout, averaging 33%, results partly from the dire poverty experienced by many families and partly from the perception of many parents and children that schooling is of little value.

This means that many children do not receive a full primary education. Indeed the completion rate is estimated currently at only 67%. ... The low quality of primary education is certainly one of the gravest educational problems facing Bangladesh." (PEDP II, 2002, page 10).

Even if we take the more optimistic figures of the government as a base one can conclude that approximately 4.5 million children in Bangladesh do not enjoy (full) primary education, but the real number is probably close to 5.6 million children. These figures include the approximately 1.5 million children reached by the Non Formal Education efforts of NGO's of which BRAC/BEP takes the lion share (see table 1 above).

Considering the present capacity of the Government, Bangladesh would need four to five times the additional capacity of organisations such as BRAC/BEP to reach its goal of Education for All in 2015!

However, the governments strategy does not take into account the efforts of the NGOs and they are excluded from most official statistics. Instead the PEDP phase II programme sets itself very ambitious goals to expand the availability of primary education (among others by building 60.000 new classrooms over the next five years) and improving the quality of education by capacity building of teachers (15.000 additional teachers per year), improving curriculae etc. and limit the drop-out rate of both pupils and teachers. However, it remains clear that even with this measures the number of young people without access to education will be high in absolute terms. If all new classrooms to be build would welcome 40 pupils (according to the desired maximum ratio for pupils-classroom of 1:40 in the PEDP II), the 60.000 additional classrooms and a similar number of teachers can cater for a maximum of 2.4 million additional pupils in 2009 (and then the additional effort needed to bring down the teacher-pupil ratio from 1:60 to 1:40 isn't even taken into consideration). This means that around 2010 still approximately 2 million children according to the GoB to 4 million according to the Education Watch report, would not have access to proper education. Still two to four times the additional outreach of an organisation such as BRAC/BEP would be needed to reach the goal of Education for All in 2015!

The vision of the government on the role of NGO's remains (as it has been for many years) that NGO's can be complementary to government initiatives in the area of pre-primary education, life-skills education for adolescents and non-formal education for adults and in case of special target-groups. The model developed by BEP for cost-effective and flexible primary education is still seen with sepsis.

Possible scenarios towards Education for All

The Gob, particularly MOPME, needs to take additional measures to reach its ambitious goals in the area of primary education. Possible scenarios towards a real and complete realisation of the EFA goal for 2015 are:

1. Additional investments in primary education (above the allocated budgets in PEDP II) and a substantial raise of the percentage of public expenditure on education (the declining percentage of 2.3 % of public expenditure on education as % of GDP in 2000/2001 and 1.1% on primary education (see PEDP II, page 21) is extremely low, compared to other countries in the region and at global level). These investments are directed to further expansion of the Government's own capacity for implementation, within the present framework and models of the Government. (This scenario doesn't consider the capacity and models developed by BRAC/BEP and other NGO's);
2. Partnerships with NGO's to complement the capacity of implementation of the GoB in primary education, using alternative models;
3. Adoption of the more flexible and cost-efficient models developed by BRAC/BEP and other NGO's, mainstreaming them in the formal educational system.

Unfortunately all these scenarios seem unlikely at the short and medium term. The present mind-set of the GoB can be characterised as a focus on gradual and limited expansion of quantity and limited improvement of quality in the do-it-yourself way. A positive factor is that at present both Ministries of Education are opening up towards BRAC/BEP and CAMPE to discuss the issue of access to and quality of education. It remains to be seen how this dialogue between the Government and NGOs will evolve in the coming years.

BEP's Strategy and scenarios

The issue of access to education is also crucial to BEP. BEP's long term vision on education states that it sees its implementing role as temporary and that it strives to become a network of resource centres on education with the primary goal of improving quality of primary and secondary education within Bangladesh as a whole.

If, in the light of its future ambition, BEP on the longer-term wants to withdraw from implementation of primary education it can only do so in case the implementation capacity of BEP will be transferred either to:

1. Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME): this requires an acceptance of the BEP-model by the government. Mainstreaming of this model is one of the few ways to enable the Government to reach out to significantly more children considering the limited resources available;
2. Communities, CBO's and local governments in partnerships, considering decentralisation of central budgets to the district and Upazila levels, thus enabling a more cost-effective, more needs based and flexible approach;
3. NGO's, expanding the capacity of local, regional and national NGO's to apply the BEP model independently and with longer term sustainability, ensuring a flow of government budgets and international donor funding.

Otherwise, withdrawal of BEP from implementation would mean that an additional 1.1 children would not have access to proper primary education, widening the present gap.

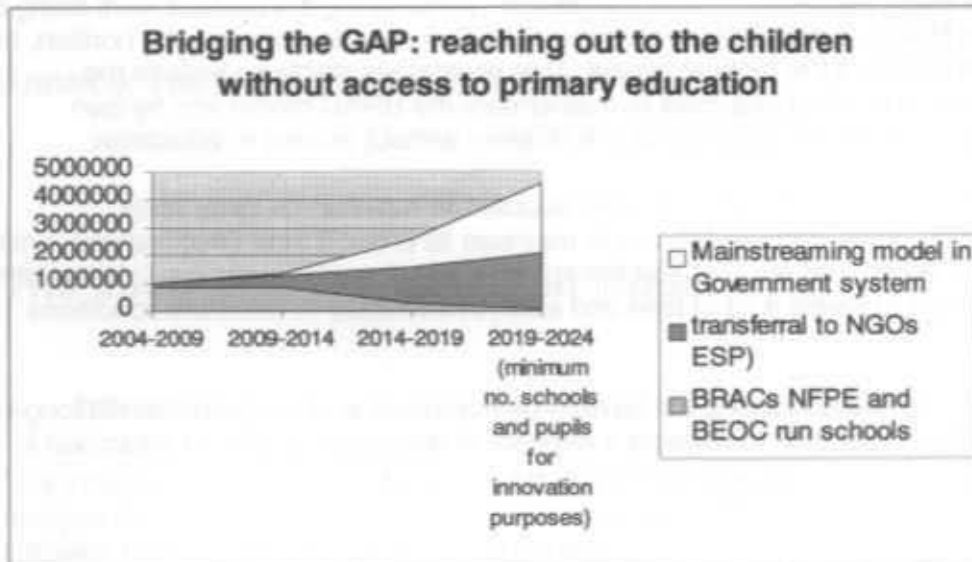
In scenario 1, it is clear that above the investments in PEDP II, MOPME should allocate significant additional resources to reach out to all eligible children. By adopting and mainstreaming the BEP-model it could make a more cost-effective use of these additional resources and possibly also resources available within the PEDP II.

In scenario 2, it is shown that the GoB could decentralise additional budget (and/or decentralise budgets within the PEDP II) to local governments and communities to reach out to more children. It is likely that in this case local capacity will only very gradually increase and probably will not be enough to bridge the gap. Additional interventions by the central government or NGOs probably are needed.

In scenario 3, BEP could transfer its model to NGOs. Also in this scenario it is not likely that all the needs will be covered and additional investments by the GoB still are needed.

From the perspective of BEP the transferral of its model to other NGO's or GoB can be presented as follows (see next page):

Table 3: Bridging the GAP: combining the scenarios



Note: the numbers and phases don't represent real figures. These are approximations to illustrate trends.

The graph above, hypothetically, shows the possible impact of two transferral strategies from the perspective of BEP. Both scenarios show a decline of BEP-run schools until a certain minimum number of schools that BEP would need as a resource and innovation centre to test new methods and models. Transferral to NGO's, e.g. by the ESP programme show first a gradual rise in total number of schools and pupils, at a later stage gaining more impact, once NGO's would be recognised by government and (inter)national donors as cost-effective deliverers of primary education. However, the impact of mainstreaming the model in the government will probably be higher and will show a faster increase on the long term (in the first period time still is needed to establish the confidence of and cooperation with the government).

Both scenarios in the graph can be combined on the short and medium term, until the whole eligible population of children is reached. After that moment, these strategies can become conflictive because Government and NGOs would be competing in reaching the same children.

Conditions to be considered for effective transferral of the BEP-model

Conditions for transferral of the BEP-schools are:

1. acceptance of the BEP-model as a viable one and formally recognised as primary education according to governments' standards (by all stakeholders involved);
2. commitment of government (and international) donors to fund the implementation of this model within their own structures or by others;
3. further improvement of the quality of the BEP-model;
4. Capacity of other actors to implement the BEP-model on a large scale (there are obvious minimum scales to the cost-effectiveness of the BEP-model). There is also the minimum of transaction-costs of donor-organisations to be considered.

If these conditions are met the scenarios above can become realistic, the third one being the one that might be the closest on the horizon, considering the present work being done already with NGO's in the ESP programme of BEP. However closer on the horizon, this scenario will not have the highest impact. This scenario is viable as long as the Government is not willing to accept to mainstream the BRAC-model and by own investments is not able to cater for all the children without access to education.

In the meantime BEP is forced by its own success to maintain its large scale implementation of the Primary schools to maintain its present cost-effectiveness, until all conditions for transferral are met and the above scenarios can be realised. At the same time BEP needs to invest a lot of time and effort in advocacy to meet the conditions above.

These scenarios and conditions will have to be combined and integrated in the long-term vision and strategy of BEP to become a network of recourse centres on education in Bangladesh.

Annex 9: The Integrated Organisation Model

The Integrated Organisation Model

1. Introduction

The Integrated Organisation Model (IOM) is a model that can be applied to describe, to analyse and to diagnose organisations. As any model, the IOM is a simplification of the complex reality in which so many different aspects all influence each other. The model should help to answer the relevant questions that are posed. Further, the usefulness of a model depends in general to a large extent on the specific situation, the questions posed and the user's know-how and ability.

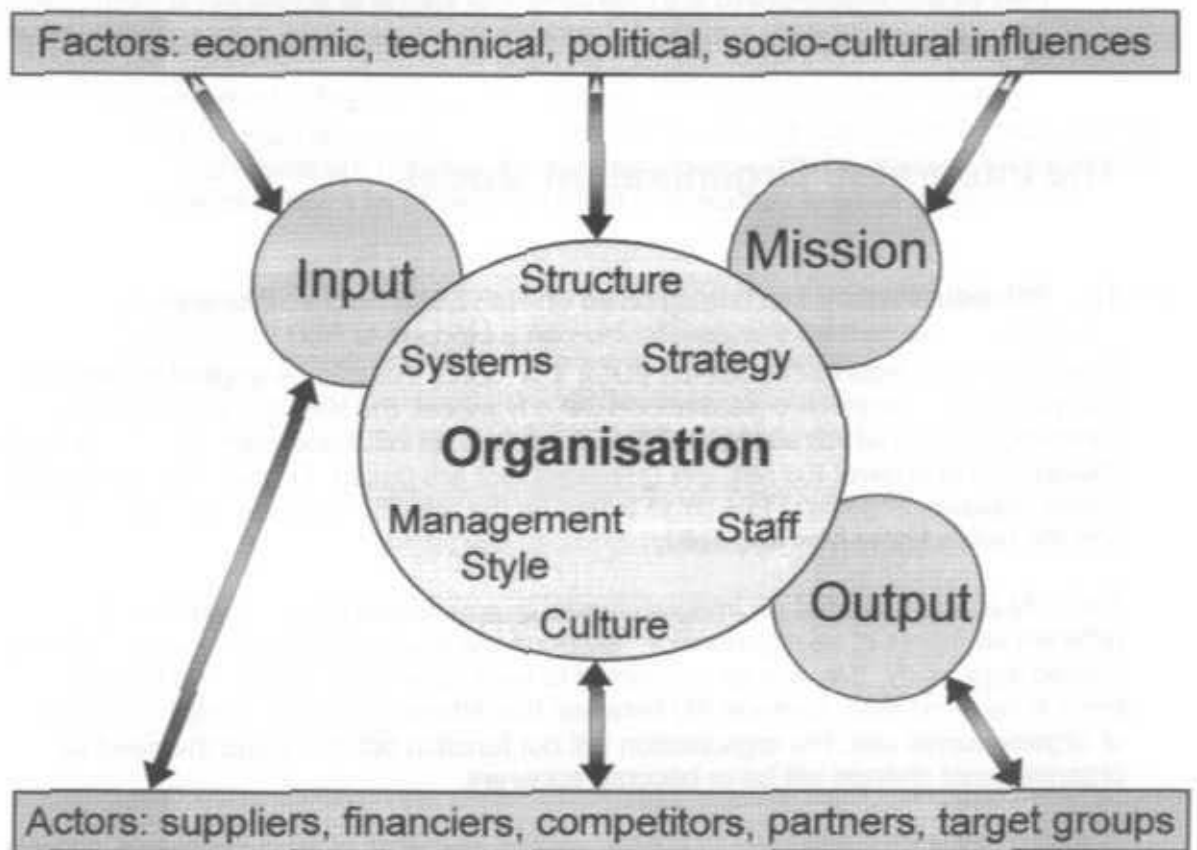
The IOM is an integrated (or integral) model to emphasise the interrelationships of the different elements of an organisation: although the elements can to a certain extent be treated separately, they are all connected to each other and - ideally - in balance. When there is no or no clear balance (fit) between the different elements within an organisation or organisational unit, the organisation will not function optimally and the need for organisational change will be or become apparent.

The IOM offers an overall tool to put the various elements of an organisation in their place, being it a government department, a non-government organisation, a local government, a people's organisation or a private enterprise wherever in the world. If you look at organisations using this model you wouldn't overlook the most important elements. However, it is an overall model, and instead of seeing it as a tool, one might rather refer to it as an organisational concept. To analyse an organisation in depth, you may need more specific tools, depending on the exact aim of the analysis. In addition, whether the 'image of the organisation' generated by applying the model is correct, depends of course much on the qualities and experience of the user.

2. The IOM: describing the model

2.1 Introduction

The Integrated Organisation Model consists of 5 external components: mission, output, input, general environment and specific environment and 6 internal components. The external components, mission, outputs, inputs factors and actors describe the environment of the organisation or have strong relations with this environment. The internal components describe the internal organisational choices. The model is called integrated because there is a balance between the components.

Fig. 1 Integrated Organisation Model


2.2 The external components of IOM

2.2.1 The mission of an organisation

The mission of an organisation is its 'raison d'être', or in other words, the overall objective(s) and main approach that explains why the organisation exists and what it wants to achieve with which means.

This overall goal is translated in the strategy into concrete, operational objectives and activities. The mission is important because it gives direction to the organisation. A good mission indicates the possibilities and limitations: what the organisation should do and what it should not do. Organisations are gradually paying more attention to formulating their mission. Mission statements are prepared and disseminated among their personnel in order to create a sense of common ideology and direction, a shared set of values. They are usually not only outside- or client-oriented (the type of products/services to deliver), but also comprise aspects of the internal functioning of the organisation (e.g. the participation and self-realisation of personnel).

Example mission statement of the International Management Training Institute:

The focus on implementation and addressing the needs of target-groups has shaped the present organisation of BEP over the years. It has increased significantly in both size and complexity, demanding increased mechanisms for co-ordination and shared and continuous learning at all levels in the organisation. Additional to the vertical lines of co-ordination, more horizontal forms of co-ordination and decision-making can be explored at all levels.

The budget of BEP, correspondingly, has increased over the years and will continue to increase during the next phase (BEP phase IV). The long-term financial sustainability of this programme requires attention, although the BEP currently has a sound base of external funding by steadfast donors. The commitment of BRAC with the BRAC Education Programme, mentioned above, is of great importance for this long-term financial sustainability. A strategy for future financial sustainability needs to be developed and discussed within BRAC and with donor partners.

The present five-year cycle of external donor funding is a threat to the continuity of the BEPs. Especially at the beginning of each next cycle this limits the capacity of BEP to maintain its level of implementation of different programmes, thus creating a concentrated threat of discontinuity. There is a need for exploring new more flexible models of funding that can also permit new donors (also donors from the private sector) to come in at flexible times.

The output of BEP has increased in quantitative and qualitative terms over the past years. Goals and targets are clearly set. For the next phase (BEP phase IV) the total number of target-groups will be around 1.8 million people. The main programme-component the NFPE-schools will remain stable (with an internal shift towards more schools implemented by local NGO's in the ESP). Initiatives and pilots of the past phase are upgraded to new programmes. It is not always clear how these new programmes relate to the core-competencies of BEP and what the strategies for transferral or mainstreaming are. Such clarity, however, is needed to prevent an unwieldy expansion and complexity of BEP.

BEP and BRAC have their support and control mechanisms well in place. There are clear procedures and regulations on financial and administrative control. There are also frequent external appraisal and review missions. The yearly audits do not present mayor problems and the recommendations are being followed-up by BEP and BRAC.

Also the Management Information System (MIS) and internal monitoring systems are functioning reasonably well. The MIS is presently being upgraded, but further investments in ICT, also at the level of the regional offices would greatly expand the capacity of BEP to make real use of the wealth of data for policy and strategy analysis and planning.

Staff motivation in BEP is high and people in BEP work hard to achieve the goals and targets. This is one of the most important strengths of the organisation. The HRM systems and policies are clearly in place. HRM, however, is not only a system but also a practice. Strengthening of coaching and feedback of staff and training of managers in this coaching and meeting skills could further improve staff motivation and performance, and the quality of decision-making.

To contribute to improved effectiveness of development organisations through the provision of management training and advice.

Possible core problems with a mission statement:

- A mission that is not being supported by staff
- Tasks that are conflicting with the mission (e.g. an independent auditor being involved in financial services. A public institute being involved in commercial activities)
- Unclear mission that does not give sufficient direction

2.2.2 The output of an organisation

The output of an organisation comprises all material and immaterial products and services delivered by the organisation to its various target groups (clients or customers).

To have a clear understanding of an organisation, it is essential to describe its output in terms of the products and/or services produced and delivered to its target groups (clients/customers). The performance of the organisation is measured by the quality and quantity of these outputs. Products and services can be for example, cookies produced by a bakery; extension services delivered to farmers, knowledge, skills and attitudes induced by a training institute or health services delivered by a local government department. Important aspects in describing and assessing the outputs are the following:

- **The quality** of a product or service determines to what extent the products and services match the needs/demands of the target group. To what extent is the target group satisfied with the products and services delivered.
- **The quantity** refers to the volume of products delivered or the number of clients served.
- **The coverage** can be described in terms of geographical coverage or in different types of target groups (income, social position, gender, etc.).
- **Experience** refers to how long have the products and services already been delivered by the organisation. Did it develop specific knowledge on these specific products and services?
- **Specialisation** implies the extent to which the organisation is specialised in certain products and services or whether it has a large range of different outputs.

Core problems with outputs:

- Inadequate quantity or quality of the outputs to satisfy demand of target groups
- No clear definition of the outputs

2.2.3 Inputs

The inputs of the organisation include all the resources available for generating the products and services of the organisation.

The following categories of inputs and resources can be distinguished:

- **Staff**
This includes the available staff in terms of quantity, qualifications, age and experience, geographical coverage, male-female ratio, ethnic grouping, permanent versus temporary staff, etc.
- **Buildings and installations**
Type, quantity and quality of the buildings and installations used for the delivery of goods and services.
- **Equipment, tools and materials used**
Description of available equipment, tools and materials used for the production of goods or the delivery of services in terms of quantity, quality, condition, etc.
- **Services of third parties**
E.g. electricity, water, insurance, accountancy, etc.
- **Information**
Information used from research institutes, statistics etc. for the running of the organisation.
- **Finance**
How is the organisation financed? Are there liquidity problems? What is the capital structure? Is the financing fixed (fixed budget) or variable? To what extent is the management entitled to (re)-allocate funds?
- **Natural environmental resources**
Natural resources (those transferred into products and those wasted during the transformation process). What is the environmental impact of the organisation? Which natural resources are used in the production process and which resources (air, water, earth) are affected?

Core problems in relation to the inputs can be:

- Too few means for the tasks required (buildings, equipment, staff etc.)
- Insufficient quality of the inputs (bad tools, limited knowledge etc.)
- Insufficient access to inputs (dependency on government, no access to credit etc.)

2.2.4 The general environment of an organisation (FACTORS):

With general environment is meant the complex set of political, economic, technical, social and cultural factors that influences this (type of) organisation.

The general environment influences the performance, creates opportunities and threats, influences the demand for products/services, the supply of inputs, the internal organisation and the possibilities for collaboration and competition.

Negative external factors that often appear:

- Political climate not being conducive

- High inflation/unstable currency
- Insecurity/
- Limited rules and regulations
- Insufficient control of rules and regulations
- Inadequate infrastructure
- Social-cultural resistance (e.g. gender)

2.2.5 The specific environment (ACTORS):

The specific environment comprises of the relations with those actors that the organisation is directly dealing with.

These relations may include:

- **Formal/vertical linkages**
With head offices, branches, regional officers, other departments. What are the formal and informal linkages, horizontal as well as hierarchical.
- **Customer and target groups**
What kinds of relations do exist with customers and target groups? What is the organisation's attitude towards customers and target groups? How do the latter view upon the organisation (does the organisation have legitimacy from the point of view of customers or target groups)?
- **Competitors**
Are there any competitors in the environment that deliver the same (type of) products and services? What is the relation between the organisation and its competitors? How is the market divided between them?
- **Suppliers of inputs**
Financiers, suppliers of material inputs, research institutes, etc.
- **Policy makers and regulators**
Local governmental organisations, politicians, pressure groups and interest organisations (e.g. labour unions).

Some common problems with actors include:

- Bad image of the organisation
- No competition
- Unreliable suppliers
- No access to financiers
- Insufficient collaboration with others
- Too much influence of politicians on operational level
- Too little or too selective networking of management

2.3 The internal components of IOM

2.3.1 Strategy

Strategy refers to the way the mission is translated into concrete objectives and approaches.

The strategy of an organisation can be defined as the long-term plan of action of an organisation to realise its objectives with the available means (inputs). A strategy aims to give direction to the activities of management and staff. A condition for giving direction to the organisation is that the objectives and activities are clear, concrete, realistic and acceptable to the various parties involved. In general we can distinguish long term (5-10 years), medium term (1-5 years) and short-term (up to 1 year) strategies.

It is not always true that strategy is the result of a planned process. Strategies might be developed in a spontaneous way, because managers in the organisation have become aware of changes in the environment and as a result change the way in which the objectives will be achieved. Regular meeting on staff level can have the same result: changing strategies. Strategies should evolve constantly when the environment changes.

Core problems in relation to strategy:

- Lack of clear plans (ad-hoc policy, no vision)
- Plans are not realistic, too ambitious, not based on an adequate analysis
- Plans are unclear or not accepted
- Plans are not monitored and followed
- Plans do not give direction

2.3.2 Structure

The structure of an organisation can be defined as the formal and informal division and coordination of activities and responsibilities.

This component of the structure of the organisation includes the division of the organisation in groups (units/teams, departments, divisions, etc.), the division of tasks, responsibilities and powers among people and groups and the way the coordination of activities between people and groups is taking place.

The formal structure refers to the responsibilities and powers as they are formally described. The informal structure includes the responsibilities and powers in practice, including the informal relations for communication and coordination.

In general, relatively much attention is paid to formal organisational structures (neatly described in *organigrams*) and far less to informal communication and adjustment between groups and individuals in organisations. Though the formal structure may provide an impression of an organisation often the real functioning of an organisation cannot be understood without explicitly addressing non-formalised linkages within the organisation.

Important structural problems can be:

- Unclear division of tasks and responsibilities
- Inadequate (de-central) powers for execution of tasks
- Inadequate co-ordination between units/departments
- Too much difference between formal and informal structure

2.3.3 Systems

The aspect of systems comprises the internal processes that regulate the functioning of the organisation.

A process is a sequence of activities aimed at a certain result. A system is a set of agreements that aims to regulate the activities of management and staff with one or more

related organisational processes. As such, systems are agreements about and give direction to the internal processes.

These internal processes can be divided into:

- **Primary processes:** directly focused on transformation of 'inputs' into 'outputs'. These include working methods and techniques.
- **Control processes:** focused on control of other processes. These include feedback, monitoring, communication decision processes, etc.
- **Strategy formulation (policy) processes:** focused on the formulation and adaptation of the organisations strategies. This includes the planning processes.
- **Support processes:** aimed at supporting the primary and other processes. This includes the financial-administrative and logistic systems.
- **Improvement processes:** aimed at improving the quality of other processes. These include research and development, quality care and evaluation activities

Systems can be described, based on clear agreements, in a procedure. A system does not have to be formally described. Informal agreements can also form a system sometimes even more important than the formal ones. Various informal systems may exist and even contradict and overrule the formal written ones. Good systems create clarity about what has to be done when by whom. Good systems enhance the efficiency of processes and reduce coordination and communication problems. More and more good systems are being seen as immaterial assets of the organisation, which are as important as the material assets.

Problems with systems in the organisation:

- Unclear or not accepted procedures
- Ineffective procedures, based on blue-prints from other organisations
- Too much emphasis on procedures and on control of everything in the organisation (bureaucracy)
- Inefficient procedures, with unnecessary and double work
- Systems that limit the flexibility of staff too much and hinder in finding new and creative solutions for unforeseen problems
- Systems that are difficult to adapt to changing circumstances (rigidity of systems)

2.3.4 Staff

The component staff refers to all activities, rules and regulations related to staff motivation and utilisation and development of staff capacity.

The behaviour of people in an organisation is of crucial importance. In some organisations you need more creative persons and in other ones more formal 'procedure' people, but usually combinations are most fruitful. The behaviour of people is a result of a complex process in which the personal characteristics are integrated or adapted to the organisation and its environment. Well-functioning of people within organisations is very much determined by a good balance and integration of both factors: organisation/environment and personality.

Some major elements staff policies are:

- staff selection (hiring and firing)
- staff appraisal
- staff motivation systems
- career opportunities
- staff training possibilities

Some common problems:

- No clear criteria and procedures for selection of staff
- Rewards system based on relation in stead of performance
- Unclear reward systems
- Unclear career possibilities
- Training the wrong staff/ training does not relate to job contents

2.3.5 Style of management

The style of management can be described as the characteristic pattern of behaviour of the management.

The management function includes strategy formulation, organising, steering/controlling/monitoring and problem solving. The manager brings together the objectives, the strategy, the people and the means. Planned activities have to be realised and the manager's main task is to steer and coordinate, using systems, procedures and regulations, but also informal communication.

A management style consists of two major components:

- Where does a manager put priorities? Which aspects does he/she feel are important and how does the manager spend his/her time:
 - internal or external relations
 - people or means
 - relations or performance
 - inputs or outputs
 - quality or quantity

- What is his/her attitude in making decisions? E.g.:
 - participatory or directive/authoritarian
 - risk taking or risk avoiding
 - long or short term oriented
 - formal or informal
 - rational or intuitive

Problems in the management style can be:

- Priorities that do not match with those needed by the organisation
- Attitude that does not fit with the culture of the organisation
- An attitude which leads to slow, unfounded or not accepted decisions

2.3.6 Culture

The culture of an organisation is defined as the shared values and norms of people in the organisation.

In general the organisational culture is expressed in the way the organisation is structured, relations between management and staff, relations among staff and how the organisation deals with the external actors (target groups, suppliers, financiers, etc.) The aspect 'culture' refers to the reasons (the norms and values) why 'things are done the way they are done'. In this sense culture influences all other aspects of the organisation.

Organisational culture reflects the norms and values of individuals, groups or the organisation as a whole. There may not be just one organisational culture, but rather different sub-cultures that may be complementary or rather conflicting and striving for supremacy. Problems in the various elements of the organisation will appear if there are too many people with different views on the organisation and their functioning in the same organisation. The same is true if the organisational culture does not comply with the culture of the national, regional or organisation-specific environment of the organisation. Certain organisations seem to have a rather strong collective culture: either different sub-cultures are incorporated in the corporate culture or they are completely absent.

Attitude towards	Examples of priorities
Influencing external factors	Emphasis on opportunities or threats
Other stakeholders	Who has priority: owners, target group, financiers, supplier, government
Inputs	Emphasis on people or means
Outputs	Emphasis on quality or quantity
Strategy	Emphasis on long or short term
Structure	Formal or informal central (control) or de-central (trust)
Systems	All regulations or all free (flexibility)
Management style	Authoritarian or participatory
Personnel	Relations or performance
Internal relations	Taking responsibility/avoiding responsibility Punctuality Openness Giving and taking feedback Tolerance

Important means to create a strong culture include selection of new personnel and deliberate socialisation processes, in which people are taught how they are expected to think and to behave within this organisation.

Some problems in relation to organisational culture:

- Priority on informal relations with strong formal structure and systems
- No attention to plans and strategy of the organisation
- Cooperation between strong hierarchical organisation and participatory approach of partner organisation
- Friction between culture of the organisation and culture of target groups

3. Assessing organisations: criteria for judgement

3.1 Introduction

To judge an organisation, a number of criteria can be applied using the description of the organisation under the various parameters. Six criteria are suggested below: suitability, legitimacy, effectiveness, efficiency, continuity and flexibility. In principle, the organisation can be judged on every individual parameter described before. In practice, a judgement will be made on a combination of parameters. As an indication, for every criterion the most relevant parameters to be included are given.

3.2 Suitability

Suitability assesses whether or not an organisation is fit to carry out required activities to deliver specified products/services.

Not all organisations are equally suitable to assume responsibility for the sustenance of the yields of development efforts. The type of activities in which the organisation has been involved until now, its size (one should be very careful to avoid overloading successful but small organisations with too many resources and responsibilities), and with that the absorption capacity, the nature of the organisation and various other factors play a role.

In applying this criterion it is important to look at:

Mission	Does the planned activity fit into the general objectives of the organisation?
Inputs	Does the organisation have sufficient resources (human, material, etc.) to carry out these activities? Does the organisation have a sufficient basic level of resources to be able to grow?
Outputs	Does the organisation have sufficient basic experience and affinity with the planned activities?

3.3 Legitimacy

Legitimacy deals with the acceptance and imbedding of the organisation in its environment.

An organisation has to fit in its environment and requires adequate relations various other organisations, institutions, public, target groups, etc.

In judging legitimacy attention has to be paid to:

Mission	Are the overall objectives accepted by society?
Outputs	How does the target group perceive the quantity and quality of the products and services? How long is the organisation already involved in these products and services? Which effects do the outputs have on the environment?
Relations	What is the image of the organisation? Which position does the organisation have among the other actors? Are the relations with financiers, suppliers, partners government adequate?
Factors	Which social, cultural and political developments influence the image? Which regulations influence the position of the organisation and its activities?

3.4 Effectiveness

The effectiveness of an organisation can be defined as the extent to which the products and services actually meet the needs of the target groups (customers/clients).

Effectiveness differs from the quality of a product or service. For example, an extension training can be of high quality (well-trained extension officer, well-prepared manuals, adjusted to the audience), but very ineffective if the necessary fertilisers to use the knowledge are not delivered in time; or if only men attend the training, while the crop concerned is cultivated by women.

The most important aspects to judge effectiveness:

Outputs	What are the quality, quantity and diversity of products and services in view of the mission?
Actors: the target group	To what extent do products and services fulfil the needs of the target group?

3.5 Efficiency

Efficiency refers to the utilisation of resources (inputs) in relation to its outputs.

The question here is to find out whether the inputs are used in an economic way in order to produce services or products. The organising component determines this relation between the inputs and outputs. How many villages are under the responsibility of one extension worker, how much does the extension department cost in order to cover a region, what is the relation between the non-productive (overhead) versus the productive parts of the organisation, etc.? In addition to norms, which however do not always exist in these fields, comparisons with other similar types of organisations may give an indication of the efficiency achieved. Costs and benefits are compared in financial, economic and social terms. It is difficult to fix norms to judge an organisation, especially for government institutes or development organisations. They operate in a specific field that can hardly be compared to the field of commercial organisations, who have markets, sales and costs that can be measured more easily.

Hard norms are rarely applicable, because figures like those presented in balance sheet or profit and loss accounts hardly exist in the development world.

Outputs	Could the organisation produce more with the same means?
Inputs	Could the organisation produce the same products and services with fewer means, including time spending?

3.6 Continuity

Continuity (sustainability) is the probability that an organisation is capable to continue (sustain) its core activities for an extended period of time.

Continuity is an important overall criterion, especially since one of the main aims of cooperating with existing organisations is a sustainable flow of benefits after termination of specific attention or outside assistance. One would like to know whether the organisation is likely to persist and therefore, whether it is worthwhile to invest in cooperation with the organisation and/or in strengthening the organisation concerned.

Outputs	To what extent is the organisation capable of delivering products and services that are needed?
Inputs	To what extent is the organisation capable of securing its inputs?
Actors	To what extent do other actors support the organisation?
Factors	Are there major threats to the organisation?
Strategy	Does the organisation have an adequate strategy to address major threats and opportunities?

3.7 Flexibility

Flexibility is the ability of the organisation to adapt itself to a changing environment.

Development interventions often intend to provide new, additional products and services. Another characteristic of development interventions is that innovation, horizontal cooperation and coordination between a number of organisations is required. Consequently, it is necessary to establish whether an organisation has the flexibility to adapt itself in order to play a role in the intervention.

Conclusions

Chapter 4 and 5 present the conclusions and recommendations of this Institutional and Organisation Analysis. The overall picture is that BEP functions as a well oiled machine and has great capacity to implement large-scale and well targeted interventions. The focus on implementation, however, distracts the attention from the elaboration of a coherent overall vision and strategies for BEP. The recently defined new vision provides an opportunity to BEP to enter such a process.



Major aspects to address flexibility include:

Inputs	To what extent can buildings, machines and installations be adapted to changes in the situation? To what extent is the staff capacity adaptable?
Outputs	To what extent can the organisation change its products and services?
Structure	To what extent can the organisational structure be adapted?
Systems	To what extent is it possible to change the systems?



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1. Approach and methodology

The donor-consortium of BEP, and in particular the RNE, commissioned this Institutional and Organisation Analysis (IOA) in the framework of the negotiation of donor-support to BEP phase IV programme 2004-2009. This analysis complements the assessment *"of the appropriateness of the NFPE IV programme in the context of national policies and developments in the education sector in Bangladesh and BRAC's own vision of its future role in education especially in the primary sector"*. That assessment was realised just prior and partially overlapping with this analysis. This IOA was realised from August 24 to September 13, 2003.

Both reports are complementary and should be considered in conjunction. This IOA does not focus on programmatic aspects of BEP phase IV but is aimed at *"determining whether, from an institutional/organisational point of view, all preconditions are met for BEP to perform and achieve its objectives in education, poverty alleviation, empowerment of poor women and pro-poor advocacy"*.

This Institutional and Organisation Analysis thus also takes into account the whole organisation of BRAC and the external context, but addresses only those issues that are relevant to the capacity of BEP to effectively implement the BEP phase IV proposal. We refer to annex 1 for the ToR of this IOA-mission.

1.1. Approach

The IOA-team was composed of three members, Frans van Gerwen (team leader), Diederik Prakke and Han Rakels, all working for MDF Training and Consultancy, Ede, the Netherlands (MDF). The team members each assumed responsibility for specific areas, but care was taken to continuously share and validate findings with each other and with the different stakeholders involved, especially at the management of BRAC. Frans van Gerwen (team leader) and MDF (Management for Development Foundation) assume the final professional and institutional responsibility for the final report.

For this analysis the "Integrated Organisation Model" was used.¹ The ToR of the IOA of BEP followed the main components of this model.² This model shows the relevant elements to consider in organisation analysis. These elements cover three levels:

- The external environment (contextual factors and relations with external actors),
- The external organisation ("where the inside meets the outside"; elements that link the organisation to its external context: mission, inputs and outputs) and
- The internal characteristics of the organisation (strategy, structure, systems and processes, staff motivation, management-style and culture).

At the same time the model shows that all elements at these three levels are related and influence the other; therefore all elements have to be looked at with an overall vision and

¹ For a description of this model, see annex 9.

² For reasons of comprehensiveness and readability of the IOA description and analysis some minor reshuffling of specific issues in the ToR was made. The SWOT-analysis was taken out this part and is reflected in the conclusions and recommendations of this report.

in their mutual relations. The model provides all the elements that are needed to make an overall analysis of the organisational performance.

The main characteristics of the approach of the IOA-team are:

- Participation of all main stakeholders in the collection of data related to the ToR;
- Continuous discussion and sharing of provisional results with BEP to ensure ownership of and commitment to the final result;
- Transparency in all activities, questionnaires and discussions about the final objectives of this mission;
- Sharing of models and methodologies used during this mission to enable mutual learning of the IOA-team members and the main functionaries of BEP

1.2. Methodology

This IAO is characterised by a combination of different methodologies in consultation and data-collection:

- Correspondence and briefing meeting with BEP and donors to fine-tune the objectives of the mission, and optimise the benefits of the mission
- Reading and analysis of reports of earlier assessment and appraisal missions (for an overview, see annex 7);
- Reading of relevant documents related to BEP (see annex 1 for a list of references);
- Interviews with internal and external stakeholders of BEP/BRAC (see annex 2 for a list of persons consulted);
- Realisation of two "Open Space" meetings at the grassroots level and at the management level, involving altogether around 120 stakeholders in BEP. These open space meetings were organised around the theme "How can BRAC better support education in the communities". These meetings had a double objective. On the one hand they were aimed to collect relevant data for the IOA. On the other hand they were aimed to demonstrate and transfer an interesting methodology to BEP on how to organise large-scale multi-stakeholder meetings (see report on the open space meetings in annex 4);
- Realisation of a participatory workshop with the top-management of BRAC to validate and discuss main preliminary findings of this IAO;
- Questionnaire to BEP-employees at different levels to measure aspects of satisfaction and motivation related to their jobs in the organisation (for the results of this questionnaire, see annex 5);
- Questionnaire to Donors to assess different aspects of their appreciation of BEP (for the results of this questionnaire, see annex 6);
- Questionnaire to BEP-employees at different levels to indicate and assess the importance of strengths, constraints, opportunities and threats in the framework of the programmes of BEP (the results of this questionnaire were only marginally used and therefore is not presented in the annexes);
- Validation workshop with BEP to discuss preliminary findings
- Review meeting with donors of the donor-consortium to discuss preliminary findings and the design of the report;
- Follow-up interviews, especially with managers of BEP, to validate preliminary findings and the draft-report.

The results of these different methodologies are combined and integrated in the presentation of the findings of this report. This combination of methodologies validates the findings, conclusions and recommendations.

1.3. Interpretation of mission findings

The ToR of this IOA covers a wide range of issues, both internal and external to BRAC, whereas BEP alone is already a large and complex organisation. The combination of the wide scope and the short time available to the IOA mission limit the depth of the analysis. This report therefore sometimes speaks of impressions and suggestions rather than of facts and recommendations, and the report does not pretend to present an exhaustive analysis. The IOA-team encourages that the findings in this report are taken as a starting point for further research and discussion, rather than as 'the final word' on the respective issues.

At the same time this IOA is complementary to the appraisal mission of the programmatic aspects of BEP phase IV. In order to ensure a sufficiently comprehensive understanding of all aspects and to do justice to the wide range of activities under the different programmes, both reports should be read in conjunction.

BRAC/BEP is continuously changing and improving its organisation. Even though the IOA-team certifies that this reports provides an accurate overall picture of BEP with recommendations with long-term validity, this snapshot can become outdated when important internal and external developments take place. In fact many of the recommendations are precisely focussed on increasing the capacity of BEP to influence its external environment. Depending on progress in these endeavours, the priorities and direction of BEP should be adjusted.

Lastly, the reader should realise that most appraisals and reviews, including this IOA, concentrate on issues in which there is scope for further improvement. A large number of recommendations can give the impression that, according to the mission, BEP is not performing well and requires major adjustments in all areas. This is contrary to the view of the IOA mission, which presents a wide range of recommendations because BEP has shown ability to simultaneously follow-up on a fairly large number of issues. Our over-all appreciation is that BEP is a very relevant, effective, efficient and accountable programme (see also chapter 5), with the capacity and track record of a learning organisation.

2. Learning from earlier missions

BEP is frequently visited by a vast number of appraisal and assessment teams and consultants concentrating on specific aspects of the BEP organisation and programmes. The conclusions and recommendations are impressive. It is laudable that BEP and its donor-consortium endeavor to keep track of these recommendations. Various lists stipulate the level of agreement of BEP with the recommendations and its actions for follow-up. Even so, it is quite difficult to "see the forest between the trees" of recommendations. Moreover, recommendations on the strategic level are not highlighted or prioritised.

The IOA-team therefore attempted to produce an amalgamation of the most relevant recommendations in relation to the institutional and organisation analysis in this report. A list of the recommendations of four earlier appraisal and review missions is presented in annex no. 7.

Visiting BRAC and its partners, the IOA-team was impressed by the time and patience of many BRAC employees (especially senior managers) to provide the information needed for this mission. The present document provides an integral description and vision of BRAC/BEP. The IOA-team hopes this report will serve as a reference point for following programme appraisals and reviews, so the ToRs of future missions can be more focussed.

2.1. Results of earlier missions

In this chapter the IOA-team highlights the main themes and recommendations of the most recent past missions and briefly discusses their relevance to this mission:

MTR 2001:

- Quality investments in Quality Assurance Specialists (QAS) have to be followed-up by continuous competency development of the QAS.
- BEP has a need-based approach to planning, which hinders long-term planning. The MTR suggested a more long-term, demand based planning. To ensure this, capacity building for data interpretation of changing trends is needed.
- Monitoring is focussed on control and accountability. Feedback is limited. An appropriate balance between checking and control and monitoring for quality improvement has to be found.
- Human factors are the driving force behind the efficiency of BEP, which functions well. The only drawbacks concern the co-ordination of these activities and the capturing of information.
- The absence of computers in field offices hampers efficiency. The use of ICTs (as PCs and Internet/email) could bring in dramatic development in communication and information. ITC would make valuable Management Information widely accessible.
- The MTR indicated a need to link MIS data to the work-plan, using information as indicators of progress.

- The MTR questioned whether RED human capacity suffices to take on the complexity of developing educational assessment tools and other activities, in spite of its reputation as a strong research centre with many academic linkages. The research function is essential for informed management decision-making.
- Organise high level workshops on BRAC mission and the degree in which this mission is translated in overall BRAC strategies. Identify components in which BEP is benefiting from support of and co-operation with other programmes.
- Prepare pilot designs including criteria for mainstreaming

ESP review mission:

- ESP's partner-NGO's have changed; they now have a larger and wider capacity & potential. There is a need to clarify ESP's long-term planning vision.
- It is necessary to revise and expand the selection criteria for partner NGO's. At the same time, the selection process could be formalised with the development of an assessment tool. Need for a formal system to identify the capacity of partner NGO's and a formal assessment of NGO's at the end of each 3-year cycle has to be made.
- There is a need to phase out those NGO's who have acquired a degree of financial sustainability. Therefore the ESP staff needs a clear understanding of sustainability issues.
- Endorsement of the placement of ESP with the BEP under DED II. The DED should take a proactive role in identifying areas for collaboration between ESP and other units and ensure the inclusion of ESP in key processes of planning, setting policy, systems for implementation and quality assurance.

AMM 2002:

- There is a need to institutionalise the level of co-operation and collaboration among the various divisions and units in the wider education programme.
- An organisational review should be made of the higher levels (managers and above) of PRIME to ensure that administration, communication and the exchange of ideas is not impeded by a dis-functional structure.

HRM mission 2002:

- Upgrade BRAC's recruitment process to attract better-qualified candidates and gain increased organisational efficiencies.
- Develop and implement organisational, departmental and individual training plans.

Appraisal mission of NFPE phase IV:

- Change the denomination of the 'Non Formal Primary Education' to 'Primary Education', because the concept of NFPE is confusing. BEP in reality is delivering Primary Education, so it should be called that.

2.2. Relevance for the IOA-mission

Analysing the findings and recommendations has focussed this IOA-team to look at specific issues in relation to the ToR of the IOA. The IOA-team observed that BEP is providing concrete follow-ups to many of the recommendations made by these missions. The missions were very helpful to further improve the capacities and programmes of BEP.

At the same time some of the issues continue in the subsequent missions. These themes might need a more long-term perspective and continued attention.

The IOA-team identified returning persisting matters in relation to this institutional and organisation analysis. Thus the team recognised the following themes:

- Continuous quality-improvement in the programmes of BEP;
- Long-term strategic planning and more coherence between the different programme components;
- Better use and access to information on programmes and ability to use it for long-term policy and planning;
- Finding a better balance between implementation and strategy;
- Need for more co-ordination in an increasingly complex organisation;
- Need for more recognition by other stakeholders of the BEP educational models.

These are themes that we recommend to take up one by one (or in combination) over a longer period than 'technical' recommendations. Progress on these themes involves analysis prior to planning, and may comprise of broad meetings and workshops. Future Missions may also contribute to addressing such themes, probably in the first place by facilitating self-assessment and planning, and only in the second place by providing expert advises.

The most important returning view, however, is that all mission teams have recognised the value, effectiveness and efficiency of BEP. All missions ended with positive final conclusions.

In the present report the IOA-team builds upon these main themes and endeavors to develop some of these issues further, taking into account that effective implementation of recommendations related to these themes is not carried out easily. It requires planning and patience.

2.3. Institutionalising learning

The IOA-team recommends enhancing accumulative learning from earlier missions. To this end the IOA team have the following suggestions:

1. BEP and the donor-consortium could prioritise recommendations, considering the strategic importance or urgency of each recommendation. It is wise to prioritise only a limited set of actions for follow-up in order to ensure that follow-up will be given and that recommendations don't disappear under the table after a certain period of time;
2. Along with the prioritisation BEP (and donor partners) could distinguish between 'technical' recommendations (e.g. minor restructuring, improving coaching) and strategic themes (e.g. quality education, BEP's niche in the education sector). While BEP may implement e.g. ten technical recommendations within a year, it may only truly address two or three strategic issues over a few year timespan. Probably the number of missions could be reduced, and missions may more often facilitate self-assessment and planning, rather than providing expert advise on strategic themes;
3. Specific reporting on follow-up (including the problems, debates or unexpected consequences) of the prioritised (technical or strategic) recommendations could be done to ensure a process of accumulative learning;
4. Reviews already receive a ToR with a focus on a specific aspect or theme. This makes the missions complementary to each other over the years. If the succession of missions is frequent, more references to other documents could be made instead of repeating the same analysis, and the scope could be narrowed further;

5. Appraisal and review teams should receive the earlier recommendations and actions for follow-up before they start their mission. Following missions could be based on the most important outcomes of earlier missions. This will prevent unwieldy growth of recommendations over time and possible confusion on the outcome.



3. Institutional and Organisation Description and Analysis of BEP

3.1. External context

3.1.1. Socio-economic, cultural, and environmental situation

Bangladesh has made marked progress in the fight against poverty. In spite of this progress, Bangladesh ranked 132nd on the Human Development Index (HDI) list of 162 countries in 2001. It is still amongst one of the poorest countries in the world. Almost 50% of the population live below the poverty line and 34% of the population can be characterised as ultra-poor. 55% of the children under five are malnourished and maternal mortality in Bangladesh is the highest in South Asia. These statistics clearly (see table below) demonstrate that, as far as poverty reduction is concerned, there is much progress yet to be made.

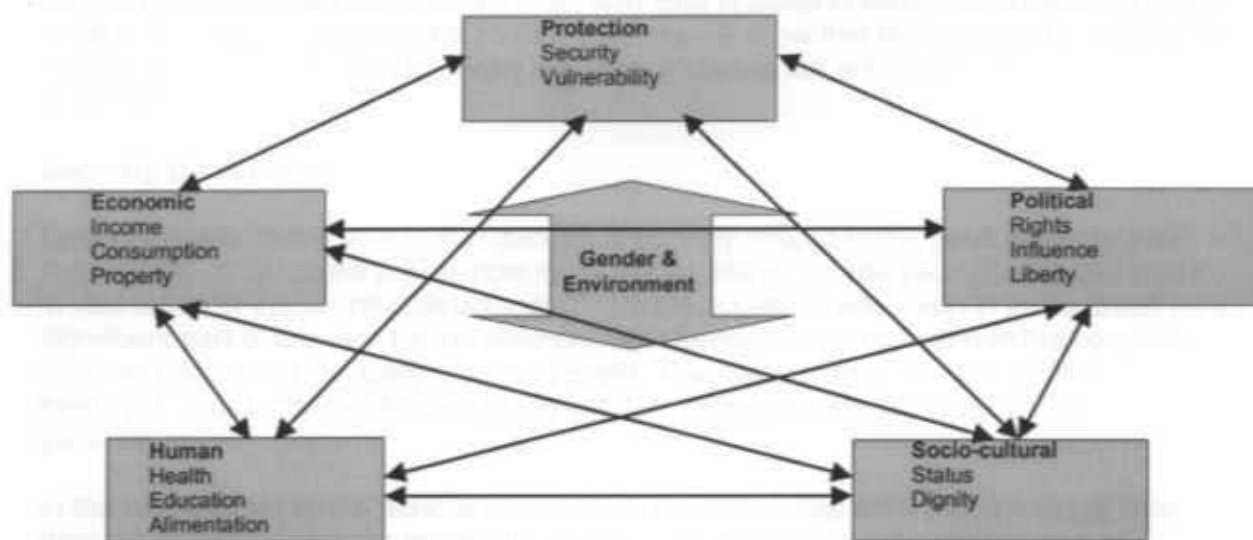
Table 1: Inter-Country Statistics on Growth, Human Development and Income Poverty

	Bangladesh	India	Pakistan	South Asia	LCD's
Per capita GNP Growth 1975-95 (%/year)	2.0%	2.8%	7.0%	5.4%	6.6%
Life expectancy At birth					
1970	44.2	49.1	49.2	49.0	43.4
1997	58.1	62.6	64.0	62.7	51.7
% change per year	1.1%	1.0%	1.1%	1.0	0.7%
Under 5 mortality rate (per 1000 life births)					
1970	239	206	183	207	149
1997	109	108	136	106	104
% change per year	-2.0%	-1.7%	-0.9%	-1.8	-1.2%
Head-count index of income-poverty					
Early 80's	52.3	46.5	29.1	45.4	Nd
Early 90's	47.0	37.4	26.3	43.1	Nd
2000	41.4				
% change per year	-0.8%	-1.9%	-1.4%	-0.8%	

Source: I-PRSP, GoB 2002, quoting 1999 HDR

Apart from these "hard" figures, poverty has many other dimensions. We refer to the DAC-OESO (2000) model of interactive dimensions of poverty.

Figure 1: DAC-OESO model of interactive dimensions of poverty



Poverty is not only an economic phenomenon. The HDI also considers (as seen above) the human dimension. More recent also the engendered HDI has been developed.

However, we have not seen data compiled on this index in Bangladesh. As the scope of this IOA-mission is limited to BRAC Education Programme we will present the elements of this model in relation to this programme, without entering into detailed analysis.

Economic Dimension:

The poverty of almost 50% of the population seriously hampers access to education. The poorest families cannot send their children to school because of the costs involved in materials, food and clothing. The fact that education is offered for free is not enough to enable the poorest families to send their children to school. The government is implementing some programmes to overcome this issue by offering food or a small financial compensation to families that send their children to school. Also scholarships are offered for secondary education. BRAC/BEP offers education for free, including the materials, to the poorest group of families.³

Another factor that limits children to enrol in both Government and BRAC/BEP schools is the loss of another earning member in the family. Sending them to school deprives the (ultra-)poor from earning the opportunity cost of child labour and gaining the minimum family-income needed.

BRAC has recently increased the focus on its target-groups in order to be able to reach more effectively the ultra-poor. Here the criterion of property is used. BRAC targets its primary education efforts towards families that own less than 0.5 decimals of land and that have to sell at least 100 days of labour per year. There is no such targeting in government programmes.

³ A small fee of 5 Taka per month used to be asked for each pupil. 30% of the poorest families were exempted of this fee. At present it is being considered to cancel this fee.

Human Dimension:

Alimentation, health and education are important aspects of this dimension. The overall picture is that poverty in Bangladesh is worsened by lack of access to these services. The (lack of) access to education will be dealt with later in detail in relation to different aspects of BEP. The figures presented in table 1 (see above) show that the situation of the poor in Bangladesh also in relation to health and alimentation is not sufficient to enable sustainable livelihoods

Security Dimension:

Lack of security of the poor in Bangladesh is strongly related to the great environmental vulnerability of the country. The most important problems are the yearly floods that occur in vast areas of the country. Structurally this limits access to education in these areas for a significant part of the year for the children. Occasionally severe floods ruin the complete livelihood (including life itself) of many people. They have to start all over again to rebuild their lives. This factor contributes in a great deal to the persistence of severe poverty in the country.

In the past decade a new serious environmental problem has emerged: access to safe drinking water has become more difficult because of increasing arsenic pollution of underground water in Bangladesh. As this is related to natural subterranean conditions, this problem is difficult to tackle.

The BRAC Development Programme and the Advocacy Unit have targeted the arsenic water pollution as one of their efforts to inform the population and authorities on this issue and promoted advocacy for more attention to this problem. BEP is co-ordinating with other units and programmes to also tackle this issue in educational activities.

Social-cultural dimension:

Gender-inequality is one of the most important social-cultural aspects related to poverty. The poverty-situation of women and children, especially girls, is more severe than for men. Possibilities for development of women and children are less because access to services, property and income is more limited.

Although bridging the gender-gap has become an element in many government documents related to poverty reduction and education, it often is not clear how gender-actions are targeted and more important how gender-equality can be integrated in these actions. Isolated approaches on women's advancement have become common (this doesn't automatically mean effective) but changing the relations between men and women, children and elderly require a much more integral approach.

In this respect BRAC Education Programme provides a good example to others. While targeting actions towards women and girls, the actions include a lot of attention to building self-esteem and dignity of the people. This approach is needed to transform gender-relations on the long term.

Poverty is more severe for ethnic minorities and isolated communities. Thus far limited attention is given to these population-groups. The government has begun recently to give more attention to the social actions needed for the minority population. It is especially in this area, where the GoB recognises the complementary role of NGO's to deliver services to specific target-groups.

More recently, also the people with disabilities or special needs came into view. These people probably face the most persistent and serious problems of poverty, because they share all the above characteristics of the poor, but in addition have to cope with physical and psychological limitations. Their access to services such as education till date is extremely limited and requires special attention. Also in this area the government recognises a role for the NGO-sector.

Different cultural aspects limit the sustainable impact of educational efforts. The copying and chorus culture, within the primary education system inhibit child-centred learning. As it has been done this way over decades this aspect is difficult to change and requires tremendous effort.

Political Dimension:

This dimension is related to the (human) rights situation of the poor and their possibilities for participation and to influence policies and legal arrangements which have a negative impact on their livelihoods. Access to the legal system by the (ultra-)poor is almost impossible, because of the costs involved.

The accountability of the government at all levels towards the citizens is low and seriously threatened by corruption and political struggles between parties. In general there is little appreciation for politicians: "once they come into power they will only think how to enrich themselves".

The political dimension of poverty requires more attention from NGO's and international donors. Actions related to the other dimensions of poverty will not have a sustainable impact if this policy-dimension is not addressed.

BRAC's actions related to the interactive dimensions of poverty

BRAC as a whole addresses all dimensions of poverty described in the DAC-OESO model. Its three main programmes are clearly focussed on economic (rural) development, health and education. These programmes with an economic and human focus, also take into account the socio-cultural and security dimensions. Gender and Environment are transversally present in most of the interventions. At the same time BRAC's programmes are targeted towards the (ultra-)poor, women and children.

The Education Programme, more recently, also targets the most vulnerable groups such as ethnic minorities and disabled people (maintaining the priority-group of women also within these target-groups).

The political dimension of BRAC's interventions is less developed, both at target group and organisational level. Only in 2002 an advocacy unit was created to influence the public and government opinions. It focuses on specific issues, mainly related to the BDP (the programme "challenging the frontiers of poverty"). BEP is exercising advocacy towards the government on specific issues in the area of education

In the following paragraphs some of the most important elements and issues in the policy-context of BRAC Education Programme will be addressed.

3.1.2. Policy context

Poverty Reduction Strategy of the Government of Bangladesh

In the i-PRSP (2002) the Government of Bangladesh has recognised the vast and persistent poverty of its population. At the same time it states that the country has one of the most vulnerable economies on earth. Bangladesh is characterised by an extremely high population density, a low resource base and a high incidence of natural disasters that have an adverse impact on long-term-savings, investment and growth.

These characteristics set very challenging tasks for the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) that has adhered to reaching the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) for 2015. In the i-PRSP the GoB outlines a strategy to reach these goals in three main tasks: a) consolidating past economic and social growth figures; b) avoiding pitfalls of development experiences and c) accepting new challenges in the context of globalisation. However, the i-PRSP does not clarify how these very general and vague tasks will be operationalised.

The i-PRSP states that "reaching the MDGs would not be easy. The goal of reducing the income-poverty level by half by 2015, for instance, will require significant additional efforts. For this Bangladesh needs to accelerate the pace of poverty reduction from 1.5% per year observed in the 1990s to 3.3% for the period 2000-15. The calculations show that *if the past trends of income inequality persist in the next decade, Bangladesh will have to sustain a GDP growth rate of about 7% per year over the next 15 years for reaching the income poverty reduction target.* (PRSP 2002, page viii). In relation to the other MDGs the GoB is slightly more optimistic.

The following table presents the projections of the GoB to reach the MDGs.

Table 2: Major Goal Posts in Poverty & Social Targets against 1990 Benchmark

Target	1990 Benchmark	2000	Annual Progress 1990-2000	2015 based on progress rate	2015 criteria MDG
Income-Poverty Adult	59	50	-1.5 %	37	30
Literacy Primary enrolment	35	56	6.0 %	88	...
Secondary enrolment	56	75	3.4 %	100	100
Infant Mortality Rate	28	65	13.2 %	100	...
Maternal Mortality Rate	94	66	-3.0 %	24	31
Life Expectancy	480	320	-3.3 %	80	147
% Children underweight	56	61	0.9 %	69	73
	67	51	-2.4 %	27	26

Source: PRSP, GoB, 2002

The i-PRSP presents a strategy that is focussed on the following areas:

- A) Pro-poor economic growth
- ensure macro-economic balance;
 - promote good governance;
 - agriculture;

- rural development;
 - manufacture growth;
 - infrastructure development;
 - technology policy
 - micro-credit policy
- B) Foster human development of the poor
C) Women's advancement and removing gender gaps
D) Strengthen social protection
E) Support local governments and broaden participation
F) Policies and institutions for reducing inequality
G) Care for the environment.

The GoB states in the i-PRSP that the "emerging challenges demand a new outlook and indeed a fresh approach towards coalition building at the level of actors (central government, local governments, NGO's, CSOs, CBOs, private sector).

... *The state machinery will play the pivotal role as the coalition builder, pace setter, strategy formulator and driver of reform and renewal.*" (ibid. page x).

In order to be able to play this role the GoB mentions that *state capacities* have to be increased and actions in this area demand an important place and allocation of budgets in the operationalisation of the i-PRSP.

Although the NGO's are mentioned as coalition partners, the i-PRSP has not actively involved the NGO-sector in elaboration on paper. And although the document states that an active role is attributed to this sector, the NGO's (and the development agencies) are merely seen as sectors that need to be democratised before it becomes a trustworthy coalition-partner.

It is questionable if the GoB will be able to implement the i-PRSP and reach the MDGs without these partnerships with the NGO-sector. Because of the short-term urgency of actions to reach these goals, the GoB should open the dialogue on co-operation with the NGO-sector as one of the first actions in the framework of the i-PRSP.

In many of the areas and strategies mentioned in the i-PRSP, NGO's and BRAC in particular have a long term experience in high impact programmes of pro-poor development and impact of GoB actions could be greatly expanded when this experience is effectively tapped.

It is striking that education receives little attention in the i-PRSP, especially when considered that three of the GoB 2015 goals are related to this area. Only under the heading of Human Development of the Poor education is mentioned. Interesting is that education is exactly one of the few areas where the role of NGO's is explicitly recognised. *"NGO's can be involved in providing high-quality education in the country along with the government and the private sector"* (ibid. page 47). Here lies an important opportunity and task for BRAC/BEP and other NGO's to force their way into the implementation of the i-PRSP.

The i-PRSP contains more possibilities for advocacy by BRAC/BEP: strongly related to the strategy of BEP to target girls and women within Women's Advancement. Local Government and Participation is also relevant, since the implementation of the NFPE-schools occur at the local level, involving interaction between communities and local governments. There are also linkages to other BRAC programmes. The i-PRSP calls for a coherent and integral advocacy towards the government, not only by BRAC but also by the NGO-community as a whole.

Education policy

The Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME) in 2002 produced its Second Primary Education Development Program (PEDP II). This PEDP II is produced in the framework of the more encompassing "Education for All, 2002- 2015" plan of the GoB. The PEDP is a sub-sector plan that addresses the area of primary education in Bangladesh. The plan was produced by MOPME in consultation with many actors, including the NGO-sector. However, this participation was limited according to BRAC and CAMPE, who were involved at certain stages. International donors, with the Asian Development Bank as leading partner, played an important role in the elaboration of this plan. As a result of different visions and positions of donors and a strong position by MOPME, the plea of some donors for having more involvement of NGO's not only in the elaboration but also in the implementation of this plan has not been achieved. The PEDP II is almost entirely directed to the own strategies and actions of the GoB and MOPME in particular.

The PEDP II takes the analysis of poverty in the i-PRSP as a starting point and places the primary education strongly in the context of poverty reduction strategies. A second important element, mentioned in the PEDP II, is the process of decentralisation. This process provides an important opportunity as the GoB and MOPME *"have endeavoured to encourage devolution of decision making to more local levels (Upazilas, School Management Committees (SMCs))... It seems that much of the required organisational structure is in place for effective decentralisation, but devolution of decision making and authority still needs to be institutionalised"* (PEDP II, page 8-9).

Primary education in Bangladesh is provided through a diverse structure of 11 categories of schools (government schools, registered non-government schools, madrassas and private schools). The primary education offered by BRAC is considered non-formal and thus not officially recognised as primary education and no mention of BRAC's NFPE model is made in the entire PEDP II.

MOPME recognises some of the major problems in primary education and the PEDP II speaks openly about high drop-out rates of 33% and net enrolment of only 75% for the formal sector. Estimates of the number of children that are not reached by the primary education system, including the NGO-efforts, vary between 5 and 6 million. Even with the most positive scenario after implementation of the PEDP II, this number will still be between 2 and 3 million.⁴ At the same it states that the low quality of primary education is one of the gravest educational problems in Bangladesh. The total number of class hours in formal primary education (five-year cycle) is one of the lowest in the world, totalling 3.840 hours against the international average of 5.367 hours. The effect of primary education on sustainable literacy is low. MOPME confirms the outcomes of independent investigations, such as Education Watch, that *"other types of school overall ratios are far better"*. (ibid. page 28).

The Education Watch reports by CAMPE are even more critical and point to a serious problem in primary education not only with respect to quantity but also to quality. But even if the own figures of MOPME are considered, the urgency for improvement in the primary education sector cannot be denied.

The most important constraints that the PEDP II has to overcome are:

⁴ For a further elaboration of the coverage of primary education and future scenarios related to PEDP II and BEP's efforts in primary education we refer to annex 5.

- A) Demand side: factors that prevent children from going to school e.g. poverty, direct costs of schooling, opportunity costs, special needs of some children, cultural constraints and prejudices;
- B) Supply side: limited capacity of schools to cater for all children needing education and lack of quality. Also at the level of teachers there is a lack of motivation to perform well at schools.
- C) Institutional: insufficient policies and arrangements to keep children at school. Inefficiency and managerial problems.

The strategy of PEDP II addresses these three areas. The project purpose of the PEDP II is to provide quality primary education to all eligible children in Bangladesh and to define the following indicators:

- Increase of current public expenditure (1.1% in 2001) on primary education increased to at least 2.8% of GNP by 2008;
- Gross Enrolment Rate improved to 110% in 2008 (97.5% in 2001)
- Student completion rate increased to 80% in 2008 (67% in 2001)
- Repetition rates reduced by 50% in 2008
- Dropout rates reduced to less than 15% in 2008 (33% in 2001)
- Absenteeism from school reduced to 20% in 2008 (40% in 2001)

International donors are expected to fund 600 million US dollar of the 1,8 billion PEDP II⁵, for the period of five years. Thus foreign donors contribute 33% of the budget.⁶

The programme components and main actions foreseen are the following:

1. Quality improvement through organisational development and capacity Building;
 - Organisational reform of MOPME implemented at the end of 2005
 - From 2005 yearly 15.000 newly trained teachers will be appointed
2. Quality improvement in schools and classrooms;
 - Students' competency based learning achievements increased by 75% in 2008
 - Proportion of class V students entering in Primary Scholarship Examination increased from present 20% to 50% in 2008 and the level of passing the exam from 5% to 20%.
 - At least 40% of the schools will meet PSQL standards and procedures in 2008
3. Quality improvement through infrastructure development
 - 12.000 new classrooms constructed annually up to a total of 60.000 in 2008
 - Water and sanitation in all primary schools in 2008
 - All new physical facilities, infrastructure and services will conform to PSQL standard
4. Improving and supporting equitable access to quality schooling
 - Net enrolment ratio and educational attainments on the basis of ethnicity, location and gender show no disparity in 2008
 - At least 20% of the primary schools adopt explicit strategies to provide inclusive education by 2008
 - Children with disabilities are identified in 2006
5. PEDP II implementation, management and monitoring
 - Concept for PEDP II co-ordination, management and monitoring system available by June 2003.
 - System becomes fully operational by the end of 2004

As the preparation of the PEDP II has suffered delays, donors will not provide their inputs before January 2004, most of the actions will show a delay of at least 6 months to a year.

MOPME recognises that these actions in the PEDP II alone are not enough and will have to be complemented by other actions. A clear example here is that in the NEP 2002 it is

⁵ The original budget of the PEDP II was 2,3 billion USD (including contingencies).

⁶ The PEDP II budget contains a small 15 million-dollar reservation for NGO 'innovations'.

foreseen to bring back the teacher-pupil ratio from 1:60 to internationally accepted standards of 1:40. This simple fact means that the 60.000 additional classrooms foreseen in the PEDP II will have to be complemented with at least 68.000 classrooms, and 34,000 additional teachers. Increasing the five-year cycle of primary education to six years as is foreseen in the NEP and NPA would even require more efforts.

Considering the vastness of these problems and challenges it is again striking, as in the i-PRSP, to see the lack of references to alternative NGO-models for primary education, while these are catering for approximately 8% of the total primary education efforts.

The National Plan of Action 2002 "Education for All" is clearly more receptive to NGO efforts in education in general and several positive references are made towards the NGO's. In the National Education Policy 2000 we can read that there will be "two streams of mass education based on the age of the learner as well as the subject to be taught. These are adult education and non-formal education. ... The non-formal education system is complementary to the primary education system". In spite of the reference to the NGO-efforts as non-formal there is an acceptance that children between 8 and 14 can be enrolled in this form of education. Following the national curriculum for formal primary education *"those boys and girls who complete non-formal education will be able to enrol themselves at the appropriate level in the formal primary education system"* (NEP 2002, page 10).

Whereas the Directorate of Primary Education under MPME does not count on NGO partnership or sub-contracting the provision of primary education, the Directorate of Non-Formal Education (targeting to increase literacy among adults until 45 years) does use sub-contracting to NGO's as a modality to achieve its targets. Criticism to the practices of this Directorate is that winning contracts requires bribes and that payments are frequently delayed.

Thinking positively, the fact that the NGO's have disappeared from the scene in the PEDP II, might be a temporary situation. The PEDP II, although almost in its inception stage, requires significant efforts of NGO's and international donors to promote more recognition of the NGO's as efficient deliverers of quality primary education and other forms of non-formal education for younger or older target-groups such as pre-primary children, adolescents and adults. The NEP 2000 and NPA 2002 could be used as leverage in this advocacy.

In discussions with Directors and DG of DPE of MOPME and with CAMPE and BRAC/BEP it has become clear that the recognition by MOPME and more recently also by MOE of the work done in education by BEP is growing. Thus far this recognition mainly is directed to the non-formal actions of BEP targeted to specific target-groups, complementing the interventions of the government. The BEP NFPE-schools have not yet been mentioned in this respect, so the mainstreaming of the NFPE-model still remains a challenge for the medium and long term. The present growing joint implementation of specific projects, however, bring both ministries closer to the experiences of BEP and it is likely that the NFPE schools on the long run will not remain out of sight. Specific and targeted lobby for mainstreaming the NFPE-model has to continue and expand.

The important message is that the situation has changed in favour to improve relations between BEP and MOPME en MOE. This opportunity has to be seized.

Other important policy-developments

Within the scope of this IOA-mission, time lacked to analyse other important policy developments in detail. Following international trends and debates in development co-operation, a lot of attention is given to processes of Decentralisation and Public Sector Reform and Decentralisation. This is also the case in Bangladesh. The i-PRSP and PEDP II both refer to the importance of decentralisation of budgets and authorities to the local level to ensure a more efficient and more need-based approach towards poverty-reduction. As education is delivered at the local level, the decentralisation process provides an important trend to be analysed by BEP. As relations with local governments and government officials at the local level are already good and the level of co-operation is intense and positive, there is an important opportunity for leverage in advocacy towards the central government.

Acquiring funding from the central government by the NGO's is only one way to achieve long-term improvement and sustainability of the education efforts of the NGO's. Acquiring funding by involving in partnerships with local governments in the future might pave an alternative way, although it is likely that these opportunities will only gradually emerge during the decentralisation process.

The same applies here as under the headings above: the process of decentralisation requires continuous attention of BEP (and its donors). Advocacy efforts should take into account the opportunities (and threats) this process presents.

Processes of Public Sector Reform will change the structure of the government at all levels. At present, the central government apparatus is extremely complex with 40 ministries and two ministries dealing with the education-sector. More efficiency and coherency of policies can be reached by reorganisation of this apparatus. This means that target-groups and key-persons in the ministries might shift or even disappear. On the one hand this threatens the good relations already built with government officials at certain levels. On the other hand this might provide an opportunity when new officials, with technical competencies, hold important positions in the government. This requires a double strategy for advocacy, on the one hand focussing on continuity (directing to the "open" officials in the ministries) and on the other hand identifying the rising stars in the ministries and maybe even transferring more competent people from the NGO-sector to the government. The IOA mission has met one ex-functionary of BEP in MOPME and there are probably more. Continuous follow up of the process of Public Sector Reform might provide more opportunities in the future.

A threat: Wide spread corruption in the state apparatus

Of course the general picture is not only positive. Besides the opportunities there are also threats. The wide spread corruption within the state-apparatus at all levels - Bangladesh has the doubtful status of being one of the most corrupt countries in the world - this is a serious problem.

In the first place corruption limits the flow of resources towards real implementation of actions and provision of services to the population as a whole. A decentralisation-process without addressing the issue of corruption will even worsen this situation, as there will be more possibilities for corruption. The IOA-team has observed this in the decentralisation of the NGO(project)-certification by the central NGO-affairs bureau. At district level the practice of corruption has already established itself by asking fees from NGO's for certification of projects. The Federation of NGO's is trying to revert this arrangement of certification and the institutionalisation of corrupt practices in this area.

In the second place corruption diverts the attention from a real policy dialogue, because officials sometimes are not in the government to develop and implement policies but simply for individual gain. As long as those officials are wide spread in the government a real policy-dialogue will be extremely difficult.

The issue of corruption deserves major attention in advocacy efforts of NGO's and donors towards the GoB. The process of Public Sector Reform probably provides the best framework for this advocacy to reach sustainable results in improving mediocre government to good governance. Until now the GoB is only paying lip service to the international plea of good governance. However, in the PEDP II the development and implementation of an anti-corruption strategy (for MOPME) is foreseen.

3.1.3. Collaboration between GoB and NGO's

The relations and contacts between de GoB and NGO's have never been frequent and friendly. With the arrival of the new government in 2001, these relations have further deteriorated. The main issue being that the government has accused a group of six NGO's (among which Proshika, a big NGO, also with activities in Education) of partisan political activities during the election process. As this is forbidden under the Societies Act 1860, the government decided to freeze the assets of these organisations pending the outcomes of an investigation. Until date, the conclusions of this investigation have not been presented. It is not evident that this group of six organisations committed any illegal actions, however there is suspicion.

After the accusations, the strategy of the Association of NGO's (ADAB) was to confront the government, mobilising support from NGO's and the public in general by media activities and demonstrations. The government did not look on kindly at this strategy and the relation with ADAB. Dialogue between the government and ADAB deteriorated and entered into a deadlock in late 2002.

The government announced that the legislation on NGO's would be revised in order to create a more coherent set of regulations and arrangements for this sector. In fact this revision was not a new action of the government but a follow-up on earlier attempts to harmonise this legislation. However, in the light of this open crisis, the intentions of the government are seen as dangerous and as attempts to control and limit the activities of the NGO-sector as a whole.

Since no effective dialogue was in place between NGO's and the government because of the frozen relations with ADAB, the sector had no way to influence this. In 2002 a group of NGO's realised a convention outside the framework of ADAB to discuss strategies to re-open the dialogue with the government, since ADAB by no means was willing to do so. This convention resulted in the creation of a temporary committee (National NGO Co-ordination Committee, NNCC) with the goal to co-ordinate a new dialogue with the government. As this strategy was not endorsed by ADAB, this convention and the founding of NNCC provoked an open conflict within the NGO-community.

The temporary NNCC realised a second convention in February 2003 and it was decided to form a second co-ordinating organisation of NGO's parallel to ADAB with the goal to continue the dialogue with GoB. In May 2003 the Federation of NGO's was formally established and from that time there are two co-ordinating bodies of NGO's with conflicting strategies. As ADAB did not accept letters of resignation from many NGO's while other NGO's chose to remain as members of ADAB but at the same time be member of the Federation, the present situation of membership and representatively of both organisations is confusing. ADAB claims to have many NGO's in its membership, but

several de facto have resigned. The Federation of NGO's was founded with a membership of 393 NGO's and until September 2003 about 450 organisations have requested subscription to the Federation. In September the board of the Federation will formally validate these new requests, expanding the membership of the Federation to a more inclusive level.

The Federation of NGO's meet occasionally with the NGO-affairs bureau (an office resorting directly under the Prime Minister) to discuss matters related to the harmonisation of the NGO-legislation.

The experience thus far is mixed: the Federation has been able to bring in their major objections and suggestions for the new legislation, but the GoB until now hasn't come up with a clear proposal. According to the federation this is related to the fact that three different Ministries are in some way dealing with the NGO-legislation and they all have their own interests. The assessment of the Federation is that it is not likely that NGO-legislation will be harmonised but that some amendments will be made to existing legislation.

The present legislation requires the NGO's to:

- Registration under the Societies Registration Act 1860;
- Registration under the Ministry of Social Affairs;
- Certification of projects of NGO's by the NGO-Office: this certification of projects recently has been decentralised to the district level, causing many problems of corruption by government officials charging a fee (of sometimes 10%) to certify the projects of NGO's;
- Clearance of international project-donations by the NGO-office.

At the same time NGO's are required to present a yearly financial and audit statement .

In the light of these requirements it doesn't seem a bad idea to harmonise NGO-legislation and the Federation isn't against it. However, it remains unlikely that this will occur. Amendments to existing laws might even create greater confusion.

The main points in the advocacy of the Federation of NGO's are:

- Abolish the Certification of Projects of NGO's as this is not complementary to the Registration and creates too many possibilities for increased corruption.
- Create more clarity on the clause on partisan political activities of NGO's: the GoB wants to place all NGO's that are accused of these activities under a Governments' Caretaker Body. This is unacceptable for the Federation and they propose that NGO's (and boards) activities should be separated from individual activities. If rightly accused, the boards of NGO's should have an opportunity to resolve these matters internally (e.g. by exonerating the accused individuals). Only when the boards cannot resolve these issues internally the GoB could place a Caretaker.
- Clarify the definition of partisan politics: human rights and advocacy activities that are directed to government policies and action cannot be considered as such.

The Federation of NGO's has encountered receptiveness from the GoB to consider these issues, but no final (draft) proposals have been shared. This is foreseen for the near future. The expectation of the Federation is that Certification will be lifted before the end of this year.

It is difficult to predict how the dialogue between the GoB and NGO's will develop. At the same time it is clear that the conflict between ADAB and the Federation of NGO's is deep and will not be easily resolved. The first signs that can shed more light on this issue would be that certification indeed be lifted and what will be the final verdict of the GoB on the alleged accusations of the group of 6 NGO's.

As both BRAC and Proshika are important and very visible NGO's, the conflict also affects the relations between these two. It is however likely that BRAC will not be affected in the way Proshika is now. It is notable that within BRAC there are no great concerns on the immediate and long-term consequences of the present crisis. This is slightly optimistic when we take into account that future legislation will affect all NGO's in the same degree. If legislation becomes more restricted, BRAC will also suffer the consequences. The issue therefore needs continuous attention from BRAC (which it currently gives, as both the chairperson and executive director are involved whereas the director of Public Relations of BRAC was appointed as the executive director of the Federation of NGO's).

Directly related to BRAC Education Programme, the activities of CAMPE are very relevant. CAMPE is the Campaign for Popular Education, a network of 450 NGO's working in the area of basic education. The network was created in 1991 as an immediate response to World Conference on Education for All, Jomtien, 1990. CAMPE works in the field of literacy and facilitates development and promotes quality products and innovative literacy models of its partner organisations. It influences the government and donor-organisations to create an enabling environment for NGO's to ensure quality education and it builds networks with organisations to achieve the goal of Education for All nationally and globally. BRAC is a member of CAMPE.

One of the most visible and important activities co-ordinated by CAMPE is the production of the yearly Education Watch Report to monitor the state of education in the country. These reports are widely used by NGO's, international donors but also by the GoB and as such are an important instrument in the advocacy efforts of the NGO's to influence the policies of GoB on education. As such, CAMPE is one of the most important allies of BEP in the promotion of its alternative education and primary education models. CAMPE complements the issue and activity-based advocacy efforts by BEP on the overall level of education policies.

3.2. Main stakeholders of BEP

The main stakeholders of BRAC Education Programme are of course the approximately 1.8 million people of the target groups (primary pupils, teachers, adolescents, adults, pre-primary children) reached by the programme in the phase 2004-2009. The scope of this IOA mission didn't permit to assess the appreciation of the services of BEP by these target groups. Based on interviews with local and regional level employees of BEP and the outcomes of the "open space" meetings, the IOA-team has the impression that the appreciation of the target-groups of the activities of BEP is positive. There are many requests of target-groups to work together with BEP in primary education. In addition to this the expansion and diversification of other activities directed towards adolescents, adults and pre-primary children are a direct result of needs expressed by these target groups. There is no systematic client-satisfaction monitoring done by BEP on its different activities to provide other data. For more information on this subject the IOA-team refers to other programmatic reviews and assessments of BEP, which are more focussed on the implementation level.

Local governments and communities at the Upazila and district level are involved in the planning and running of the NFPE-schools and in many cases also other programmes. BEP relates to the Upazila Recourse Centres to co-ordinate activities and build capacities. The relations are described as good and many letters of local and district government officials express a clear support to BEP's activities and make requests to extend the areas

of co-operation. These letters are often directed to national level government officials, thus trying to acquire more commitment of this side for co-operation with BEP.

At the national government level the main stakeholder is the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MOPME). Relations with this ministry are increasing at the technical level, directors and the Director General-PME. There is a clear recognition of the capacity and relevance of the work of BEP and there is a will to extend co-operation. This is especially so with BEP's pre-primary schools and post-primary education (transferral of a limited number of government community schools to BEP). The interest extends also to the projects with adolescents, reading centres and community libraries. However, the NFPE-schools is avoided as a subject and isn't part of the areas of co-operation. BEP recently has approached the Ministry of Education to investigate possible areas of co-operation in secondary education. Also with the Ministry of Youth and Sports, BEP maintains regular dialogue and is realising joint activities.

BEP is working with 514 NGO's in the ESP-programme to operate NFPE-schools. These NGO's highly value the co-operation with BEP. There is an interest to extend the co-operation as well as in number of NFPE-schools as in other programmes. BEP is seen as competent and reliable, although sometimes strict partner: especially with respect to financial aspects the NGO's sometimes claim that the level of support is not enough. The co-operation with BEP provides an important reference for these NGO's in their relations with donors and local governments.

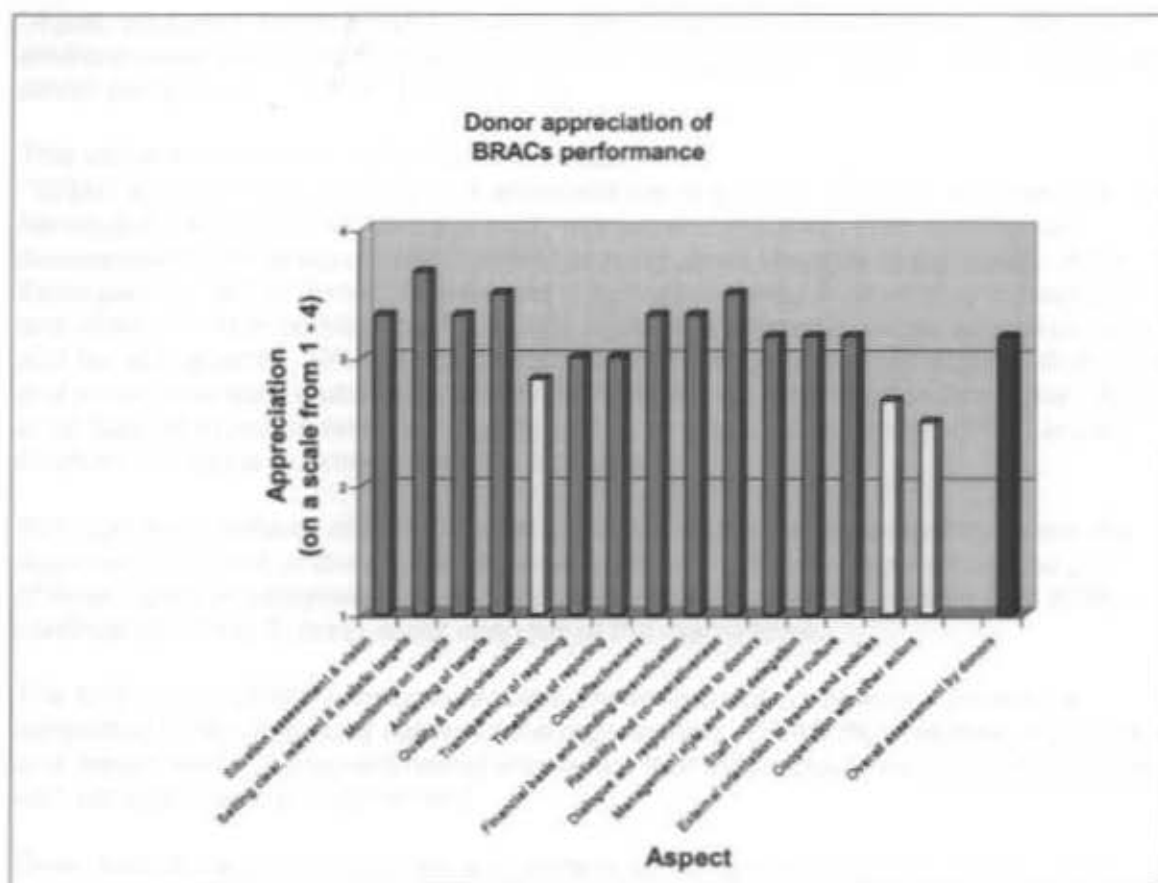
National NGO's: BRAC is part of most networks and maintains extensive relations with NGO's. Lately the relations with some NGO's have suffered setbacks. As BRAC was the initiator of the Federation of NGO's the relation with some ADAB member-NGO's, especially Proshika has changed into a cold shoulder. CAMPE is one of the main networks that co-operates intensively with BRAC/BEP.

The International donors of BRAC/BEP have formed a donor-consortium (in 1991). This consortium maintains a collective dialogue with BRAC/BEP on funding requirements, monitoring, evaluations and appraisals of BEP. The Donor Liaison Office (DLO), staffed with two programme officers and two service staff facilitates the relation of the Consortium with BEP. The relation between DLO and BEP is intense and reciprocated by trust and co-operation.

Also at the level of the individual donors the relations with BEP are characterised as intensive, open and constructive.

The results of a questionnaire with 6 donors of the consortium show the following picture.

Table 3: Donor appreciation of BRAC's performance



IOA research, 2003

The general appreciation of BEP by members of the Donor-Consortium is higher than average (on a four point scale of poor, less than average, higher than average and good). Most aspects were considered higher than average and only three aspects were characterised as lower than average.

The highest appreciation of the donors was related to:

- The capacity of BEP to set clear and relevant targets;
- The capacity of BEP to achieve these targets;
- The reliability and co-operativeness of BEP.

The elements that were least appreciated are:

- The interest of BEP in co-operation with other actors;
- The level of external orientation towards trends and policies;
- The level of quality and client-orientation.

Especially on the element of quality and client-orientation the IOA-team has observed differences of understanding of these concepts between the donors and BEP.

3.3. Vision and Mission of BEP (within BRAC)

The society of BRAC is registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860 and complies with all regulations and legislation with regard to NGO's.

BRAC's overall vision is:

"A just, educated, healthy and democratic Bangladesh free from hunger, poverty, and environmental degradation as well as all forms of exploitation based on sex, religion and ethnic background." (BRAC 2001b, p.12)

This vision is translated in the following mission:

"BRAC works with people many of whom still live in poverty, illiteracy, disease and other handicaps, especially the hardcore poor, women and children. With multifaceted development interventions, BRAC strives to bring about changes in the quality of life of these people. BRAC firmly believes and is actively involved in promoting human rights and dignity through building poor people's, especially women's, social, economic, political and human capacity. BRAC is committed to making its programmes socially, financially and environmentally sustainable using new methods and improved technologies. As part of its support to programme participants and its financial sustainability, BRAC is also involved in various income-generating enterprises.

Although the emphasis of BRAC's work is at the individual and community levels, the sustenance of work of the organisation depends on a pro-poor, pro-women and pro-children policy environment and on supportive infrastructure. To achieve that, BRAC will continue its efforts to bring about changes at the macro level.

The fulfilment of BRAC's mission requires the services of competent professionals committed to the goals and values of the organisation. BRAC thus believes in promotion and development of programmes of excellence that will produce leaders and managers with competence and commitment.

Given that development is a complex process requiring a strong dedication to learning, sharing of knowledge and being responsive to the needs of the poor, children, adolescents and women, BRAC places a strong emphasis on the overall development of its programme participants and their organisations at all levels. BRAC thus engages itself in the process of capacity development of its staff and programme participants.

In order to achieve its goals, wherever necessary, BRAC welcomes partnerships with the community, like-minded organisations, governmental institutions, the private sector and development partners both at home and abroad." (ibid. p.12)

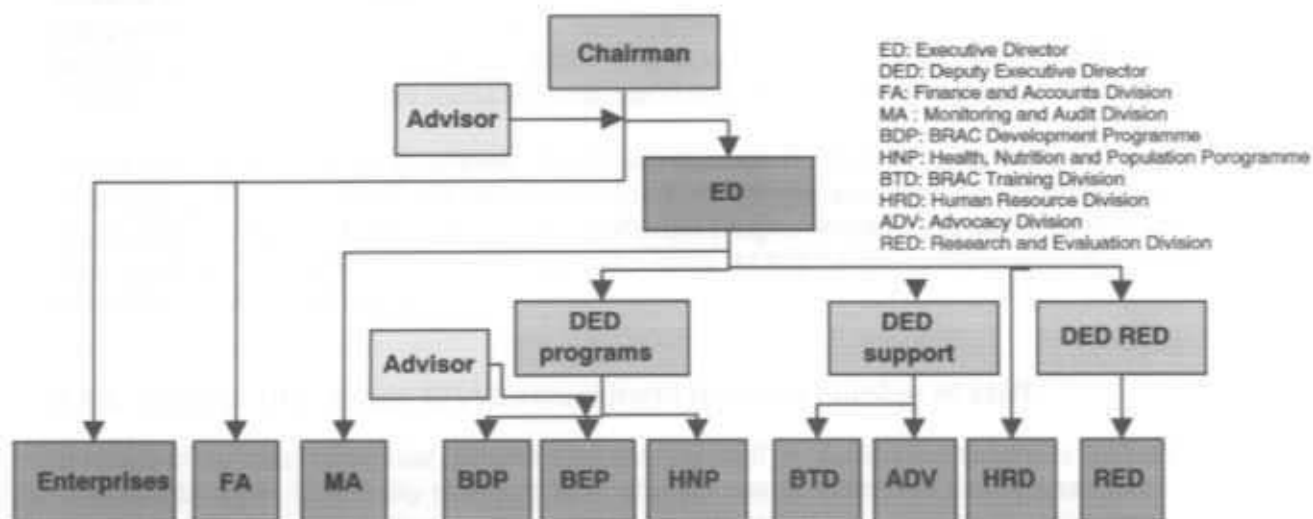
BEP is the translation of the vision and mission of BRAC in a concrete strategy in the area of education and this programme complements the BRAC Development Programme and Health Programme. These programmes together contribute to the realisation of the mission of BRAC.

BRAC Education Programme especially contributes to the element of building the faculty of the poor people in respect to social, economic, political and human capacity, with emphasis on women. It also contributes to the capacity development of staff and programme participants. This situates BEP at a very central place in BRAC's overall mission.

3.4. Place of BEP in the society of BRAC

The society of BRAC as a whole constitutes one of the biggest NGO's in the world and it is certainly the biggest NGO in Bangladesh. Before we introduce the structure of BEP specifically a few words are needed to outline BRAC's overall structure. A basic representation of BRAC's overall structure is the following:

Figure 2: Overall structure of BRAC



3.4.1. Top management structure of BRAC and place of BEP

The Chairperson of the society of BRAC is responsible for overseeing the overall operations of BRAC and still exercises executive functions in relation to the financial management and strategies and he is chairperson/shareholder of the BRAC University and BRAC-related enterprises. The chairperson also represents BRAC in some external bodies.

The executive director (ED) is responsible for all programmes, Research and Development (RED), Support Units and directly supervises the Monitoring and Audit Unit. The ED exercises some functions of official representation of BRAC in external bodies.

Three Deputy Executive Directors are responsible for:

- DED 1: BRAC Training Division and Advocacy Unit
- DED 2: BDP, Health and BEP
- DED 3: Research and Evaluation Division (presently on leave)

An advisor is appointed at the top-management level to advise the ED, DED. A second advisor advises Programme Heads and Co-ordinators on issues related to the BRAC Education Programme.

Especially relevant to the functioning of BEP are the support units at BRAC-level (Training Division, Human Resources Department and Advocacy Unit), RED, the Financial Administration, Monitoring & Audit Unit, the newly established (2002) Advocacy Department and the BRAC University Institute of Education and Development (BUIED) that is recently conceived and to be set up independently under the structure of BRAC University.

The relations with the support and financial departments are mainly at the functional/operational level and are well established. The link with RED is relatively weak. It is not clear how RED defines its agenda of researches and it is also not clear how BEP can influence this agenda. As a result only occasionally research is carried out that is commissioned by BEP and directly relevant for this programme. A few years ago a list of priority research items was elaborated by BEP, but only a few of them have been carried

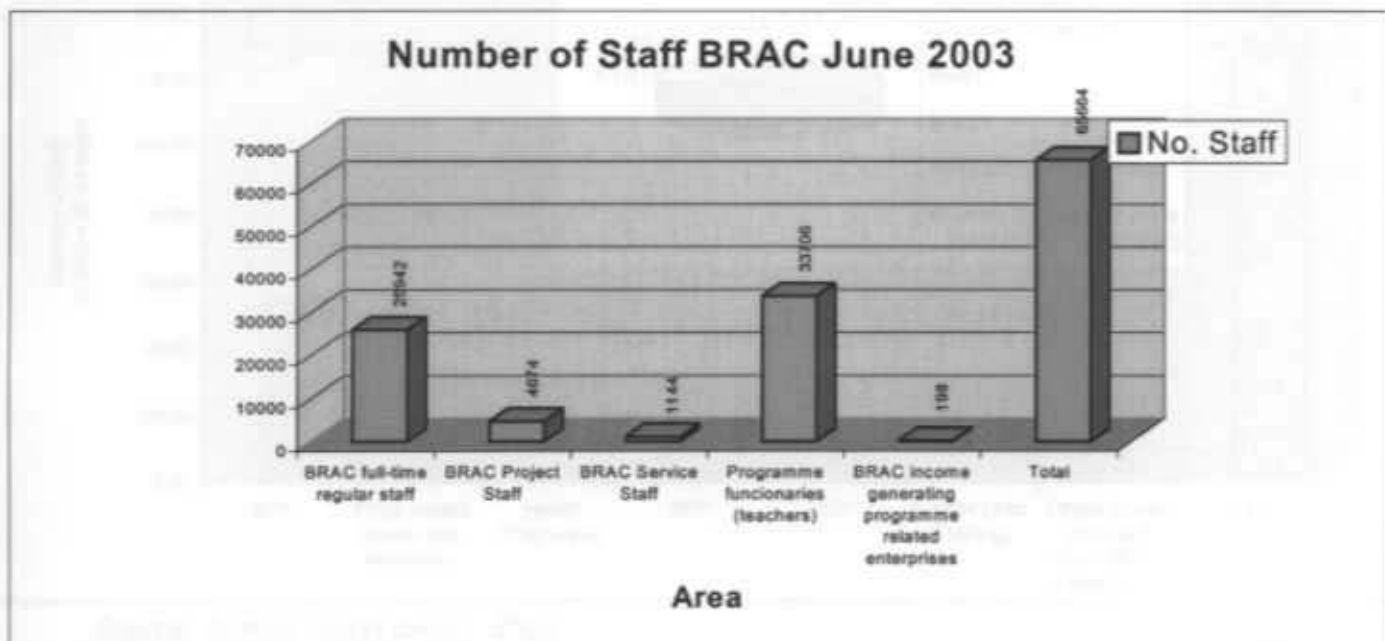
out. The relations with the Advocacy Unit (which is resorting under Support Units), because of the recent creation of this unit, are important but not yet clearly defined and established. Future relations with BUIED will be very relevant, but are not yet defined. This institute will be functioning within the University of BRAC, related to BRAC, but functioning independently. The Chairman of BRAC establishes the link between BRAC and the University as its chairperson. At the same time several of the functionaries of BRAC are involved in the University as lecturers and members of the Scientific Board.

At the central level the programmes are clearly divided in different units in the organisational structure. At the decentralised- level we can see that the infrastructure of regional and district offices is serving the different programmes at the same time, thus rationalising financial and infrastructural resources. At the functional/operational level, the programmes are clearly divided.

3.4.2. Place of BEP within BRAC-structure in terms of number of staff

In terms of number of regular, project and service staff, including the teachers that are recruited by BEP, University staff and staff of programme related income generating related enterprises (excluding the commercial enterprises) we arrive at the following picture:

Table 4: Number of staff BRAC (June 2003)



Source: Human Resource Department BRAC, 2003

The total number of staff employed by BRAC is 65,664. BEP's place in the overall structure of BRAC is congruent with its central place in the mission of BRAC. In terms of human resources BEP employs 3,270 regular and 3,464 project-staff members in May 2003 on a regular basis. The 3,464 project-staff of BEP is not included in the statistics of the HR Department. BEP in the regional offices maintains separate statistics and monitoring of this staff. This means that these staff-members are not within the HRD-system (but they are included in the salary-system of the Financial Administration Department). It is recommended that also the project-staff be included in the HRD-system in order to ensure that these project-staff members can benefit from the same support

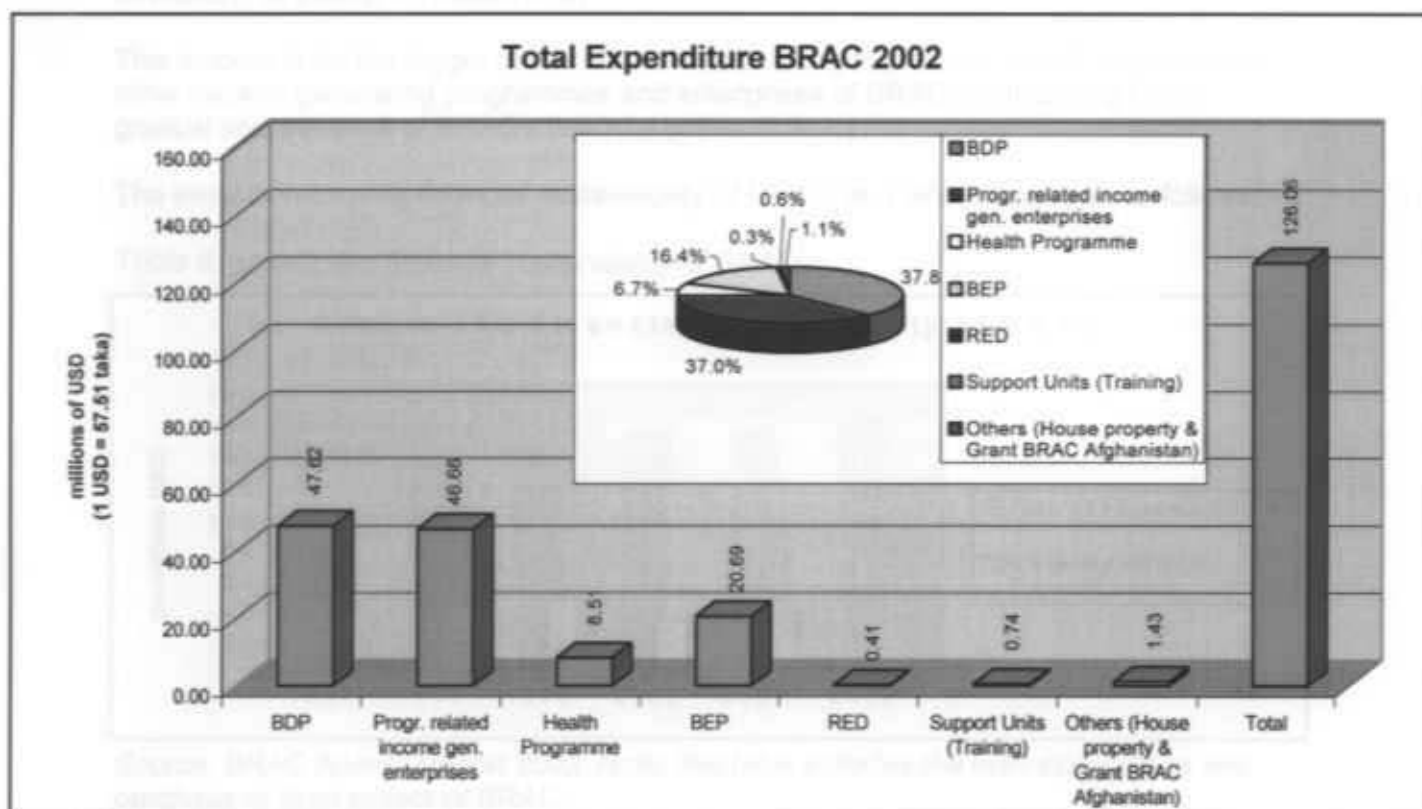
from the HRD. Inclusion of the BEP project-staff is also needed to maintain accurate statistics on the total number of staff in BRAC.

In the table above we have added the project-staff to the official number of HRD on project-staff in other departments. If the teachers of the NFPE schools are also taken into consideration in the statistics of HRD (they are included in the numbers of HRD) the total number of staff within BEP is 40.440. In terms of human resources BEP employs by far the largest number of people.

3.4.3. Position of BEP in the BRAC-structure in financial terms

In terms of finance (expenditure on programmes) the BRAC-structure can be represented as shown as follows:

Table 5: Place of BEP in BRAC structure in financial terms



Source: Annual report BRAC, 2002⁷

Considering the scope of the BEP-programme in terms of expenditure, this programme comes second after the BDP programme (the programme-related enterprises are related to all programmes of BRAC). Investments in the BDP per beneficiary are higher, but this is

⁷ To avoid unbalance in this picture, in the total expenditure the value of the loan portfolio and the new loans paid in different BDP-programmes (loans to VO-members (21.10 million USD); Motor Cycle Loans (0.92 million USD) and Other Loans (4.34 million USD) have not been taken into account. Also the Purchase of fixed assets (8.59 million USD) has not been included. These figures in total account for 34.94 million USD, which explains the difference between the balance-statements on expenditures (126.06 million USD) and the total expenditure of BRAC in 2002 (161 million USD) presented in the introduction of the annual report of 2002.

logical considering the nature of that programme (involving investments in inputs and machinery etc.).

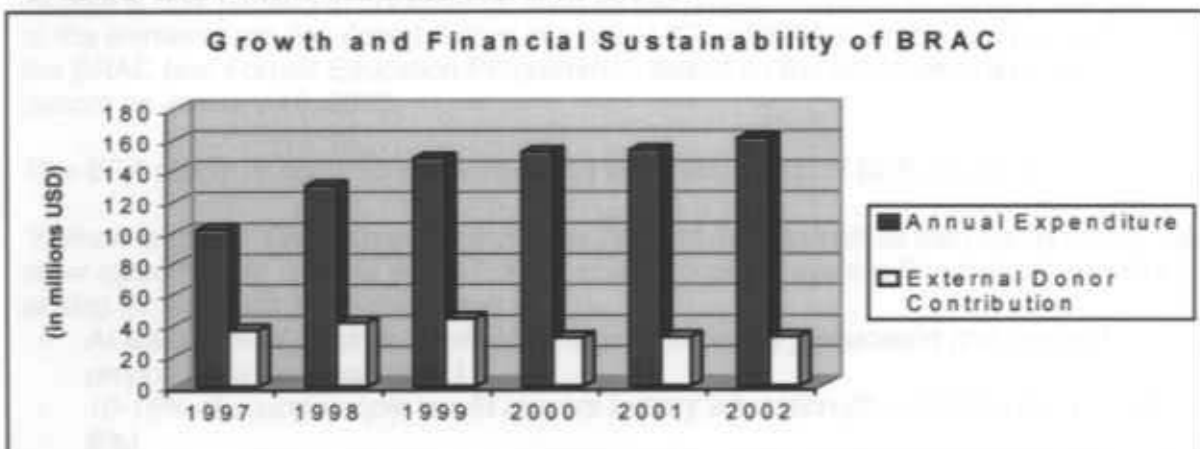
The income generating programme related enterprises are BRAC printers, BRAC Cold Storage and AAF Aarong Shops). The commercial enterprises of BRAC are ltds. They function separately as enterprises, with BRAC as a shareholder. The Chairperson of BRAC (BRAC as an institution is the shareholder of the commercial enterprises) serves as a link between these enterprises and BRAC. The independent commercial enterprises are: BRAC Bank, BRAC Industries, BRAC BD Mail network, BRAC Renata Argo Industries, BRAC Services, BRAC Concord Lands, Delta BRAC Housing Finance Corporation, Bangladesh Netting Factory.

BRAC in this way is generating a significant income of its own. Without having exact figures on the enterprises and income generating programmes, this income amounts to several millions of dollars. For example the present 330 million USD portfolio of the Micro-credit programme (2003) is generating almost a 15% profit for BRAC, which alone is amounting to almost 50 million USD.

This income is for the bigger part invested in expanding the Micro-Credit Programme and other income generating programmes and enterprises of BRAC, contributing to the gradual improvement of BRAC's financial self-sufficiency.

The trend in improving financial sustainability of BRAC as a whole has been as follows:

Table 6: growth and financial sustainability of BRAC



Source: BRAC Annual Report 2002. Note: this table includes the loan expenditure and purchase of fixed assets of BRAC.

The goal of BRAC is to reach 50% self-financing of the BEP over the next 20-25 years. In other words: BRAC aims to finance 50% of BEP's budget (which is foreseen to stay roughly the same) from profits made by BRAC enterprises. Considerable self-financing *within* BEP (in other words by payments for education by parents) isn't the goal: BRAC's/BEP's vision is that Education cannot (and need not) be sustained by payments for service-delivery by the target group. Whereas BRAC targets to raise its own financing of BEP to 50% in 20-25 years, the lion share of the remaining 50% of the budget will need to come from donors or the government. In view BEP's vision of becoming a Resource Center, the composition of the budget will also over this period.

At present BEP is the BRAC programme that is most dependent on external financing. BRAC's contribution to the BEP-programme in the past period was 0.4 million USD per year (approximately 2%) and for the next period will expand to 0.8 million USD (per year).

At present BRAC is investing an amount of 1 million USD dollar of own income in the Health Programme, which is also sustained 70% by contributions from target-groups for service delivery in this programme.

These figures demonstrate a clear commitment of BRAC at the overall level to improve the independence of BEP of external funding on the long-term, but that the planned increase is still enormous. On financial aspects and sustainability specifically related to BEP we will return in section 3.8 on inputs of BEP.

3.5. Strategy and main objectives of BEP

BEP did not formulate a separate vision and mission in the past BEP-plans, but it does formulate its own specific strategies for its programme components that contribute to the general mission of BRAC.

At present BEP is developing a specific long-term vision on "Education for All" in Bangladesh and its mission towards achieving this, within the scope of BRAC's vision and mission. This vision has been discussed internally and also with the donor-consortium but till date is only partially in documents, such as the project-proposal for 2004-2009. Some of the elements are developed further in a paper "Consideration of the future direction of the BRAC Non Formal Education Programme", based on the outcome of a meeting with donors on January 16, 2003.

This BEP phase IV document describes the long-term vision of BEP as follows:

"Human resource development is the major need of Bangladesh as the country has limited other resources. In order to be part of the emerging global system Bangladesh should be aiming for an education system where:

- *At least 40% of children would have a good secondary education (the present proportion is less than 15%.)*
- *10-15% of young people would receive tertiary education (the current ratio is under 5%)*

These figures will not be reached without a major improvement in quality and achievements at primary level.

Government will be unable to meet this need from its own resources; so there is still a case for external assistance in the foreseeable future. Moreover, the government has not demonstrated the capacity to develop and implement creative approaches to serve effectively the disadvantaged groups in the population who remain deprived. Therefore, if all external assistance funds were to be channelled directly through the government these will not be utilised to the best advantage. Although both BRAC and the donors recognise that ultimately education is a public sector responsibility, there is still a need for a diversity of providers, preferably working through an increased institutional capacity at Upazila and local level. At the same time, there should be a gradual shift towards funding from indigenous sources, with higher public allocations for education and greater mobilisation of community and other non-government resources.

BRAC has the ability to support the government's primary and basic education goals both through its primary schools and other education activities and its role as a learning resource centre. Equally important, it can support the government education programme through its large and widespread organisation at a community level due to its extensive VO network. Through the combination of these factors it is envisaged that BRAC could eventually become a network of Education Resource Centre for the nation, assisting with community-based management of education, teacher training, curriculum development, and capacity building.

In this vision the progression seen for BRAC is from its present position as providers of basic education to one as a network of Education Regional Centres on a regional/ national scale. This path will take BRAC through a growing role in high priority innovative activities ranging from early childhood and pre-primary schools, to extended primary and post-primary basic education, to education for children with special needs, and to creating community learning centres. (BEP phase IV, 2003, page 15-16).*

This vision clearly points towards a different direction than the one in the past phases of BEP's programmes. In discussions with people within BEP and with donors the IOA-team saw that the vision is not yet widely shared and discussed at all levels within BEP. It is still a provisional vision and mission-statement of the top-management of BEP. The vision is not yet translated coherently in long-term programmatic and financial strategies. The process is still in its converging stage.

As the vision to become a network of resource centres on education is projected at the long term, at least not before 2015 it doesn't have immediate consequences for the strategies and objectives of BEP 2004-2009. The results of the process of elaboration of this vision likely will have consequences on the strategies and contents of BEP 2009-2014.

For the Programme of BEP 2004 - 2009 the overall strategy is directed towards obtaining more recognition by the GoB for NGO's and BEP's efforts to deliver primary and non-formal education and to promote co-operation between government and non-government providers of education. As explained in earlier paragraphs this recognition is not expected at the short term, however activity-based co-operation and partnerships with the GoB can pave the way towards government recognition. As the long-term vision, described above has not yet been translated in concrete long term strategy, the main strategy for the period 2004 - 2009 is to continue the implementation of the NFPE and BEOC schools at the present level. The ESP programme, working with the same model, will expand its co-operation with NGO's during the following years. BEP foresees to expand activity-based co-operation with the government (GPU) to improve the recognition of GoB for BEP's overall activities. The adolescent education programme will also expand, with several changes in specific components. Continuing Education & Information Technology will consolidate lessons learned in the previous phase and make some adaptations to previous models. Post-Primary Education will evolve from its pilot-phase into a mainstreamed programme.

Overall, this means that the implementation of activities and target-groups will gradually expand over the next phase, maintaining the present level of NFPE-schools as the crux of the whole BEP-programme.

In addition to these strategies some general principles and cross-themes are defined that will orient the next phase. These are mainly continuation of principles and themes of earlier phases:

- A clear gender-perspective in all programmes;
- Affirmative actions in favour of women in all of its hiring practices;

- Provision of safe working environments
- Increasing attention toward specific target-groups: ethnic minorities, children with special needs(new in phase IV)
- Inclusion of values education in activities and curriculum.
- Expand linkages with other organisations and institutions.

Analysing the overall strategy, the IOA-team has observed that it is merely formulated in general terms and that it doesn't state how each component of BEP contributes to the overall strategy. At the level of programme components, the elaboration of strategies is done at a more detailed level, relating activities and output to strategy and to the mission of BEP. This approach doesn't facilitate the process of understanding, between the coherence of the programme-components and the overall strategy.

3.5.1 Definition of strategy, goals and targets

Strategy formulation for the five-year cycle BEP plan is done at the top management level of BRAC and BEP. Extensive bilateral and collective consultation takes place with members of the Units of BEP and with the regional offices. General goals and targets are set by the BEP-management. This setting of goals and targets takes place at the level of each programme component (5 in total). A sixth non-programmatic component related to the management and co-ordination of the programmes is added as a final component. All programmes at their respective levels in addition to goals and targets elaborate a specific strategy, which is focussed on the implementation of their respective programmes.

The observation made earlier that the overall strategy and coherence of components isn't strong is also related to the process of definition of strategies and setting of goals. However this process involves a lot of consultations, there are no clear mechanisms and moments of collective discussion and decision-making related to the formulation of strategies and setting of goals. There is no formal management-team that takes into consideration all the different programme-components to ensure coherence and complementarity. The relative importance and relevance of each specific component in relation to the overall strategy, therefore is not always sufficiently explained. The lack of collective discussion and decision-making might weaken ownership and commitment of the managers and staff of specific programme-components to implement strategies and realise the targeted goals. This also limits clear dissemination of strategies, goals and targets at the regional level and finally at the local implementation-level.

The IOA-team observed that at the level of co-ordination and distribution of tasks and responsibilities over different units, managers and technical functionaries face problems of understanding. In reality the different programme-components at the implementation level are very much related, but the formal system of task and responsibility distribution along vertical lines limits the possibilities to co-ordinate the different programmes jointly at the implementation level. At this level inter-programmatic decision-making on implementation-aspects isn't a practice, despite all the informal consultation taking place. This replicates the limitation earlier identified at the strategic implementation level.

This situation hasn't yet threatened the level of understanding and commitment of programme and project staff at the regional and local offices. The IOA-team believe this is mainly because the way strategy, goals and targets were set in the past (and also in the future BEP 2004-2009). This hasn't changed much over the years and thus the continuity ensures better understanding. However, if vision and strategy is changed (and this will be the case in the plans of BEP for the upcoming future) the existing mainly informal arrangements of discussion and consultation, might not be enough to ensure this understanding and commitment of staff at the lower levels.

There are two programme-components (one of them a sub-component) within BEP, where the IOA-team did observe some issues that deserve attention.

ESP: The Education Support Unit that works under programme-component 1: Non-formal primary schools only recently became part of the BEP-structure at the Head Office. The strategy under this programme-component states that expansion and implementation of NFPE-schools by local and regional is important. The ESP-programme needs to grow. But this expansion is not being elaborated or discussed among the wider and collective stage because of its past physical separation. As a result ESP has no clear long-term strategy on expanding the capacity of NGO's to implement the NFPE-school model. It is merely focussed on goals, targets and efficiency. This was also identified by an earlier assessment mission on the ESP (2003). To be able to fulfil expectations of expansion of this programme within the overall programme-component of primary education, such a strategy is needed.

GPU: The Government Partnership Unit was created under the BEP III programme. BEP states that the creation of this Unit was a result of negotiations with the EC related to additional funding. The EC expected BEP to invest more time and efforts in expanding the co-operation with the GoB. BEP was happy with this possibility to expand isolated experiences in co-operation with the GoB and GPU organically became a part of the BEP-structure and it is a very important strategy of the BEP as a whole.

The GPU is responsible for the implementation of two programmes in co-operation with the GoB (Pre-primary schools and Community Schools) and the PRIME-project, which involves activities related with advocacy and development of models and agreements with the GoB. In 2003 the PRIME activities had a modest coverage of 28 districts; but all GPU activities together run in 58 districts. The position of GPU as a separate unit within BEP does not fully enable to develop a coherent strategy with BEP as a whole. Its structure is vertical and it is mainly focussed on implementation.

3.6. Structure of BEP

3.6.1. Organisational structure

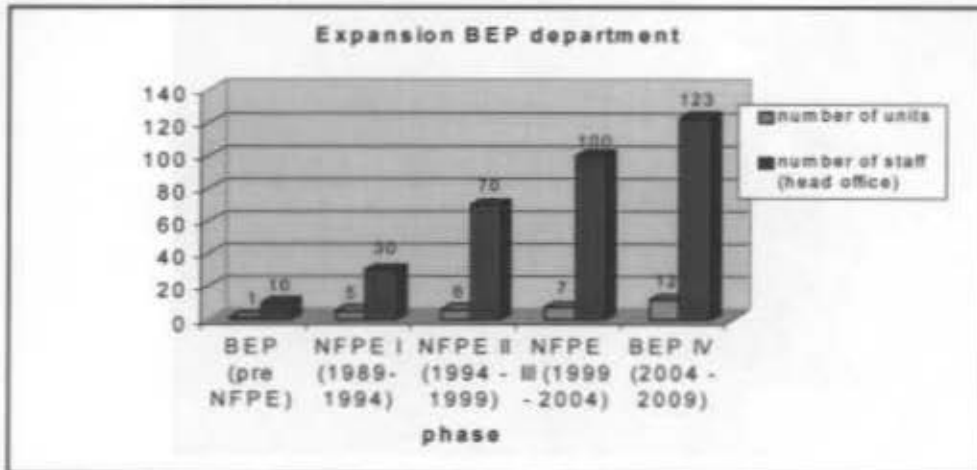
BEP has a complex structure that has grown and has adapted over time as BEP ventured into new areas of need. During the past phases a great number of new and complementary activities was added to BEP's portfolio.⁸ Consequently, the organisational structure became more complex and the number of BEP employees increased

⁸ The IOA-team in a workshop with BRAC/BEP management suggested an approach for developing new areas and initiatives based on the core-competencies of BEP. These competencies can be used as criteria to define whether or not to explore new areas. Core-competencies of BEP identified by the IOA-team are:

- Innovation of educational models
- Targeting models on specific target-groups, especially girls and women
- Up-scaling of successful models
- Cost-effective implementation of models
- Planning, monitoring and control of large-scale operations
- Management of complex organisations

significantly over the years. Although the total number of staff is gradually stabilising, new units keep on being established. The table (see next page) shows the process of expansion and increasing complexity of BEP.

Table 7: Expansion and increasing complexity of BEP



Source: HRD and interviews with BEP.

The rationale for establishing new units is not always clear and the IOA-team has the impression that new units are established mainly as a result of successful new initiatives and pilots.

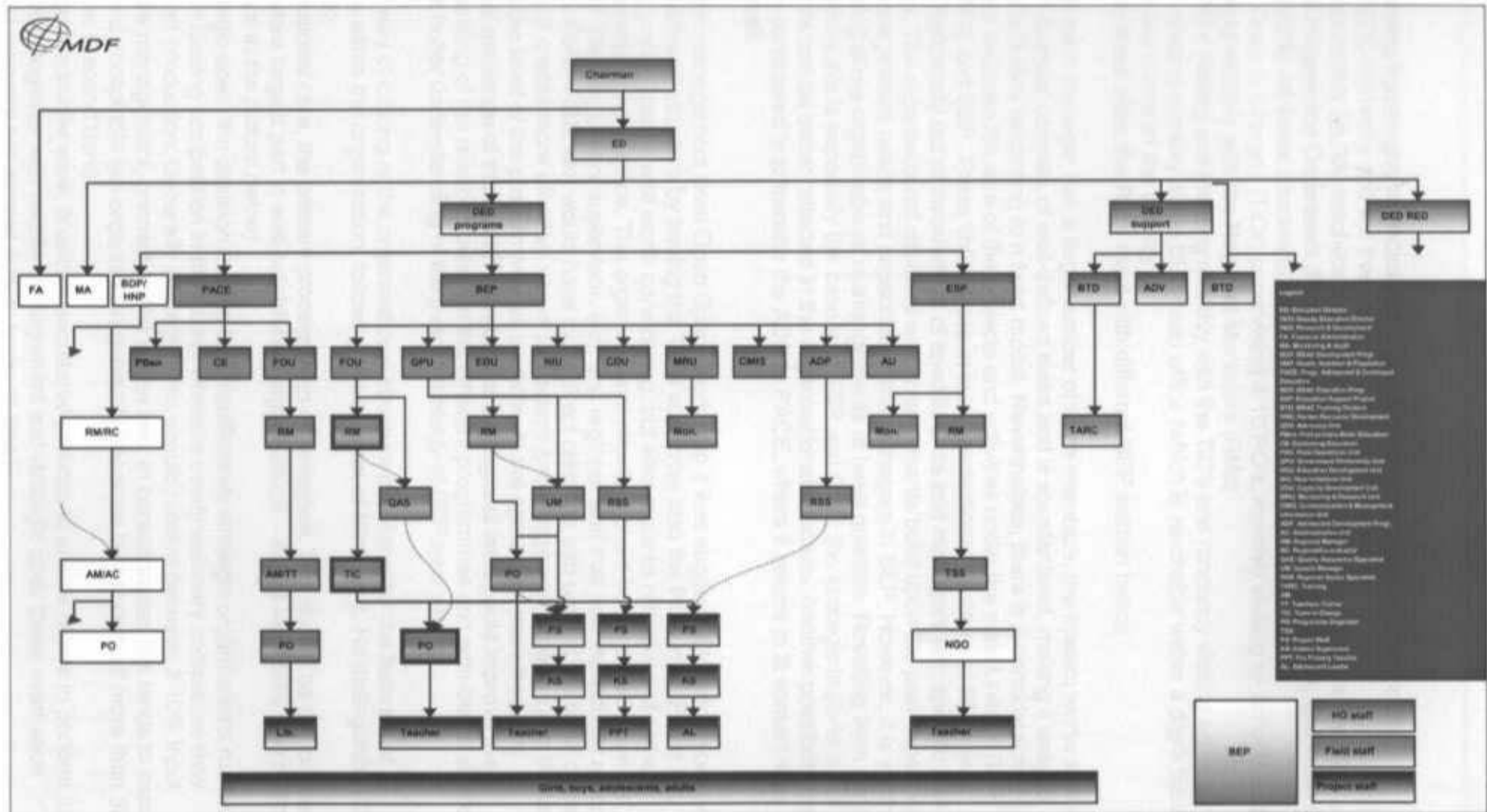
The phase III mid-term review team (2001) recommended BEP to develop a vision and strategy in relation to the long-term possibilities for replication and transferral of successful pilots. Although BRAC indicated that during 2002 and 2003 a follow up of this recommendation would be made, the current IOA-team was unable to see if this issue was fully addressed. A first step however has been made; BEP addressed this issue in the meeting with donors on future vision in January 2003.

In discussions the IOA-team identified one area where there is a clear interest of BEP to do so. A full scale BRAC Youth Development Program could be developed as a new programme. The current ADP could develop into such a programme (or become part of it). The long-term vision and strategy thus ensures divergence from the core-competencies of BEP without a risk of dispersion of the overall programme.

The organisational structure of BEP in spite of its size and coverage of central, regional and local levels is reasonably flat. This is a strong contribution to BEP's success, as it is able to maintain short communication lines between the bottom and the top. The present structure of BEP at the different levels is present in the figure on the next page.



Figure 3: organisational structure BEP



The following figures give an indication of numbers of employees involved in the NFPE/BEOC hierarchy and the frequency of their interactions:

- Approximately 34,000 teachers (number fluctuates according to schools in cycle)
- 2500 Programme Organisers (Pos) visiting 10-12 schools twice a week, and involved in monthly refresher courses to all teachers
- 500 Team in Charges (TiCs) supervising 4-10 PO's, monthly visiting all schools and meeting monthly with the Regional Managers (RMs)
- 45 RM's visiting and meeting monthly with the TiC's and randomly visiting schools, and meeting monthly at the BEP head office (which is reachable within a day's travel from any corner of the country)
- At the head office the RM's meet with different BEP section heads

Although each manager has a large number of team-members, the system works well as the 'BEP formula' consists of well-defined tasks and is standardised, making it easy to scale-up activities according to a fixed model. Nevertheless, there is a considerable imbalance between the size of the projects and activities under the main Units of BEP: BEP, PACE and ESP. These imbalances in the organisational structure of BEP have evolved historically out of involvement of specific units and managers with specific new initiatives. The organisational structure and arrangements build upon the past experiences and suit the present needs and capacities of the managers in BEP. However, it is worth considering some organisational rearrangements at head quarters. Resulting from earlier observations this is especially the case with ESP and GPU; the strategic importance of these units can be better reflected in the organisational structure. Another possibility that might be considered is to transfer the ADP to PACE, where it seems to fit content-wise equally well.

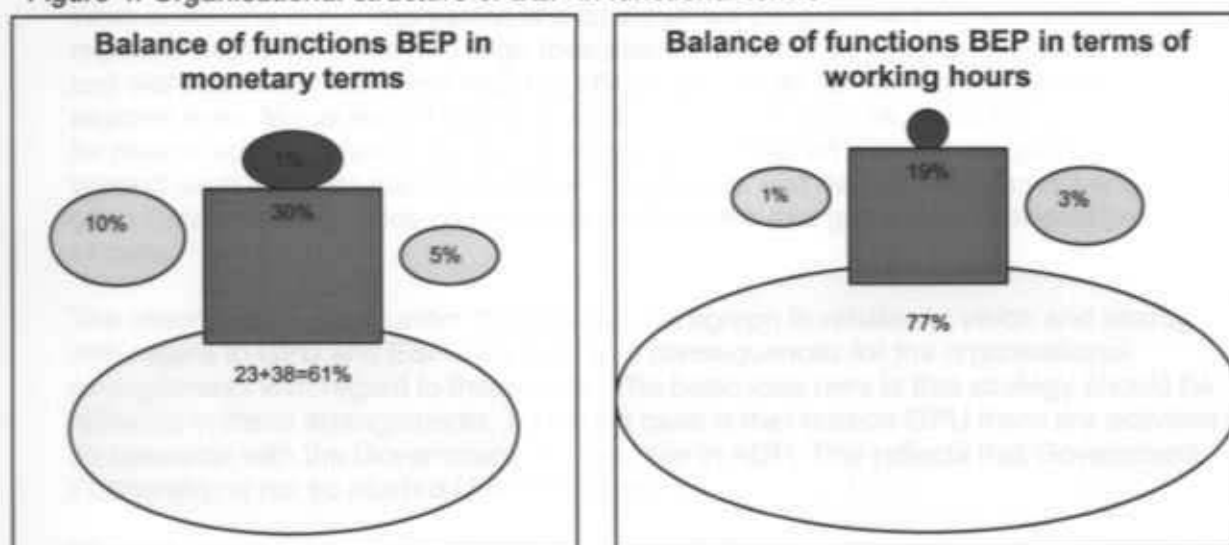
During the management level Open Space workshop it was suggested to bring more unity in the command structure by having the TiC's supervise also the PO's in ADP and PP. This suggestion seems well worth considering, but also requires rethinking of some arrangements at head office. The organisational structure could be simplified when the PO's (MT English, Library supervisor, etc), and regional staff that now individually report to the RM's (QAS, RSS, etc) would have more direct relations with units at the head office. This would enable more effective use of the overall knowledge and experience in these areas at the level of the programmes as a whole. At the same time more frequent horizontal exchange of these staff-members at the regional level could improve the understanding of the relations between the different programmes and activities and would enable a better understanding of the overall strategy of BEP as a whole.

Another way of looking at the organisational structure is to consider the balance of functions within the organisation, following the concept of Mintzberg. He distinguishes five functions:

- Operational core, the primary process in an organisation. This should be the focal and therefore largest part in well-established organisations – say at least 50% (*the bottom portion in the picture below*)
- Strategic apex, the decision making top. Insufficiently strategic organisations run the risk of losing competition in the future, whereas overly visionary companies may neglect production. Generally strategic apex should receive between 2-10% input
- Middle management, connecting the former two. In bureaucracies this tends to expand beyond acceptable (an organisation generally becomes bureaucratic if more than 30% of time is spend here)
- Support, administrative, financial, secretarial services to enable others to perform their function (together with middle management and strategic apex these overheads should normally not exceed 30% in terms of time)

- Techno-structure, which is involved in R&D and improvements. A healthy techno-structure (e.g. certainly 5-10% of the time in innovative organisations, like the foreseen Resource Center) is needed to materialise the dreams endorsed by the strategic apex

Figure 4: Organisational structure of BEP in functional terms



The above images provide a general impression and are based on the following data:

Monetary terms	Hours spend
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23% Teachers salary + 38% materials cost = 66% expenditure in the operating core • 30% Middle management • 1% Strategic apex • 10% Training (fixed in the budget) • 5% Support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 34,000 teachers who work 3-4 hours/day are operating core • All BEP regular staff, minus trainers and developers (e.g. CDU) are predominantly middle management • BEP top is part-time and BRAC top full-time (but then for all programmes) in strategic apex • Training (TARC) and development (e.g. EDU) form the techno-structure • HRD and FA are largely serving BEP, whereas within BEP certain sections and persons are fully dedicated to support

These images of BEP indicate that the emphasis is vastly on the core activities, and the middle management body is not excessively large. To function as the Resource Center that BEP intends to become, strategic apex and techno-structure may increase.

3.6.2. Mechanisms for decision-making and co-ordination

BEP has its vertical system well in place and it operates a well-oiled machine. The frequent meetings between employees and their superiors and the short hierarchical communication lines make BEP's functioning strongly implementation oriented. Managers are fully aware of what happens in the field.

BEP has also a powerful informal co-ordination system in place, typical for the open BEP culture. The amicable informal contacts are striking. People the IOA-team got acquainted with during the short visit would be seen frequently in many different corners of the BRAC head office. These bilateral contacts are an essential feature and considered by BEP

employees to be a great strength of the organisation, streamlining communication within the respective programmes.

The horizontal co-ordination mechanisms seem to be weaker. Structural cohesion and a collective thinking on vision and strategies between programmes seems to be limited. What is missing in our impression is a forum where programme heads and managers regularly exchange ideas and align their plans to a common strategy. Regional managers and staff, working from these regional offices also could do this more frequently at the regional level. Management teams should not become a bureaucratic burden or a forum for routine action planning, but a regular place to reflect on how the programmes can support each other for maximum impact. Teamwork and decision-making not only yield good ideas, but also builds commitment to decisions that go beyond individual project scopes.

The observations made under the previous paragraph in relation to vision and strategies with regard to GPU and ESP also can have consequences for the organisational arrangements with regard to these units. The basic idea here is that strategy should be reflected in these arrangements. A specific case is that outside GPU there are activities in co-operation with the Government, for example in ADP. This reflects that Government Partnership is not so much a Unit but a strategy.

The IOA observed that BEP in recent years is implementing a process of decentralisation of its structure and decision-making to find a better balance between checking and control, monitoring for support, and consultative decision-making processes. This balance is difficult to obtain considering the need to constantly control the whole organisation on accountability issues and to keep an immaculate track record. Although BEP employees acknowledge that a lot of formal and informal consultation takes place, it is also felt that there is still more room for decentralisation and participatory decision-making. Considering the open BEP culture, the implementation of such mechanisms seems to suit the organisation well. It can afford to continue its process of democratisation because it has already a disciplined monitoring and control mechanism in place.

3.7. Inputs of BEP

3.7.1. Human resources

The most important input of BEP is without doubt the impressive number of staff-functionaries and locally recruited teachers. Below some basic figures on staff composition of BEP (only regular staff, 2003) are presented:

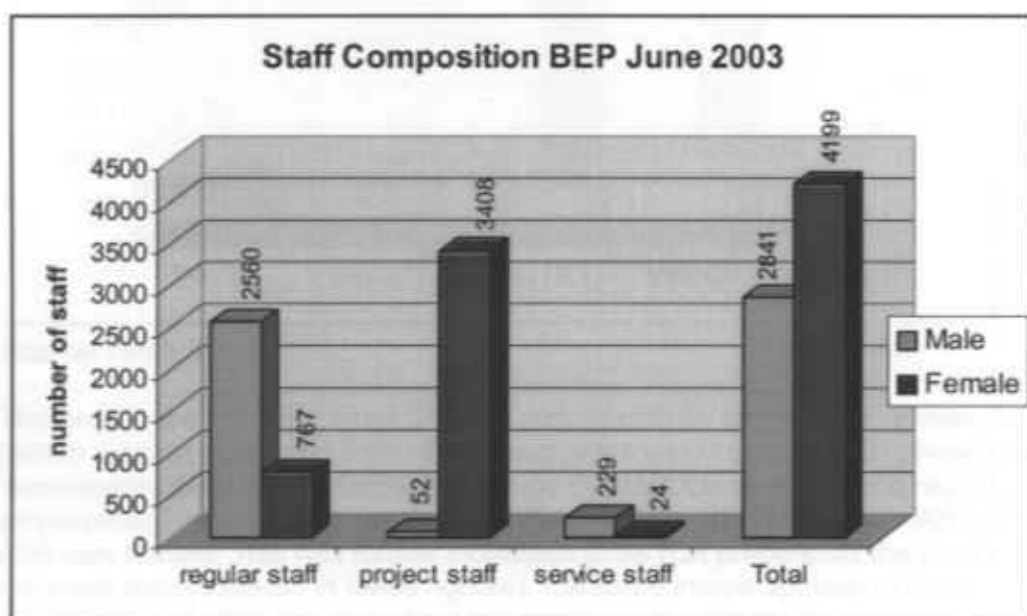
Table 8: Staff composition BEP, June 2003

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Table 8: Staff composition BEP, June 2003



Source: MIS data BEP June 2003

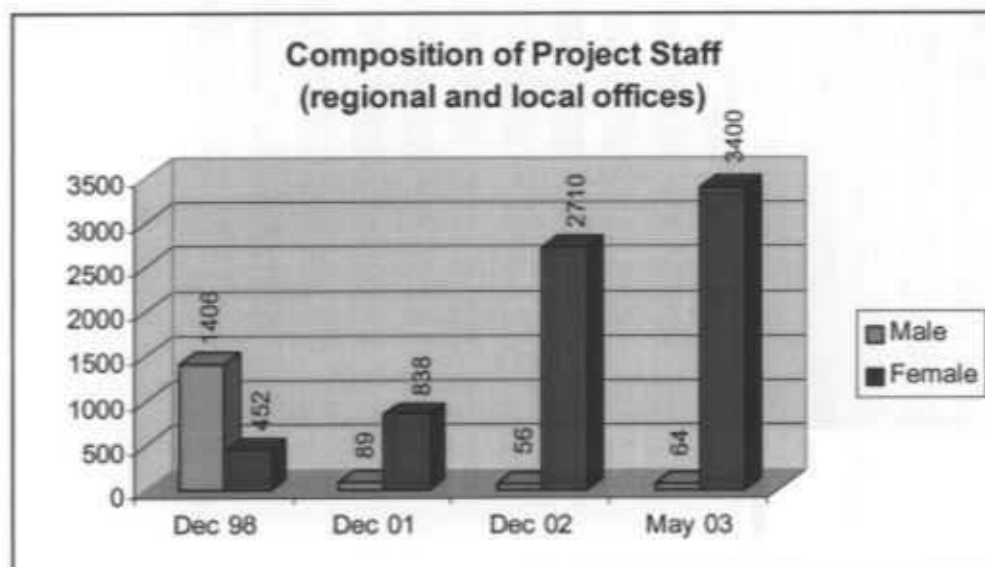
The total number of staff in BEP in June was 7.040, 59.6 % of them female. At first sight this gives an impression of gender-balance. Taking a closer look, this is not the case at the different levels.

The regular staff is for the bigger part composed of male employees (76.9%). The regular staff of BEP at the Head Office shows a gender-balanced picture: 48.7% of that staff is female. This means that the difference in gender-balance of BEP-staff is almost entirely accounted for by the regional offices. At this level approximately 75% is male. The IOA-team didn't have access to reliable data on the historic trend of this staff composition.⁹ The service staff at the Head Office is almost entirely male, thus showing an important gender imbalance. At the level of project-staff the picture is reversed: 98.5% of the project staff is female. According to historical data of the HRD department that was confirmed by BEP,

⁹ In paragraph 4 it was already observed that HRD does not maintain a register of all BEP-employees. Therefore the data provided by that department could not be interpreted. This underscores the importance of harmonising the staff-records of BEP and HRD.

this has not always been like this. The historical trend in staff-development at the project level looks like this.

Table 9: Historical trend in composition of project staff



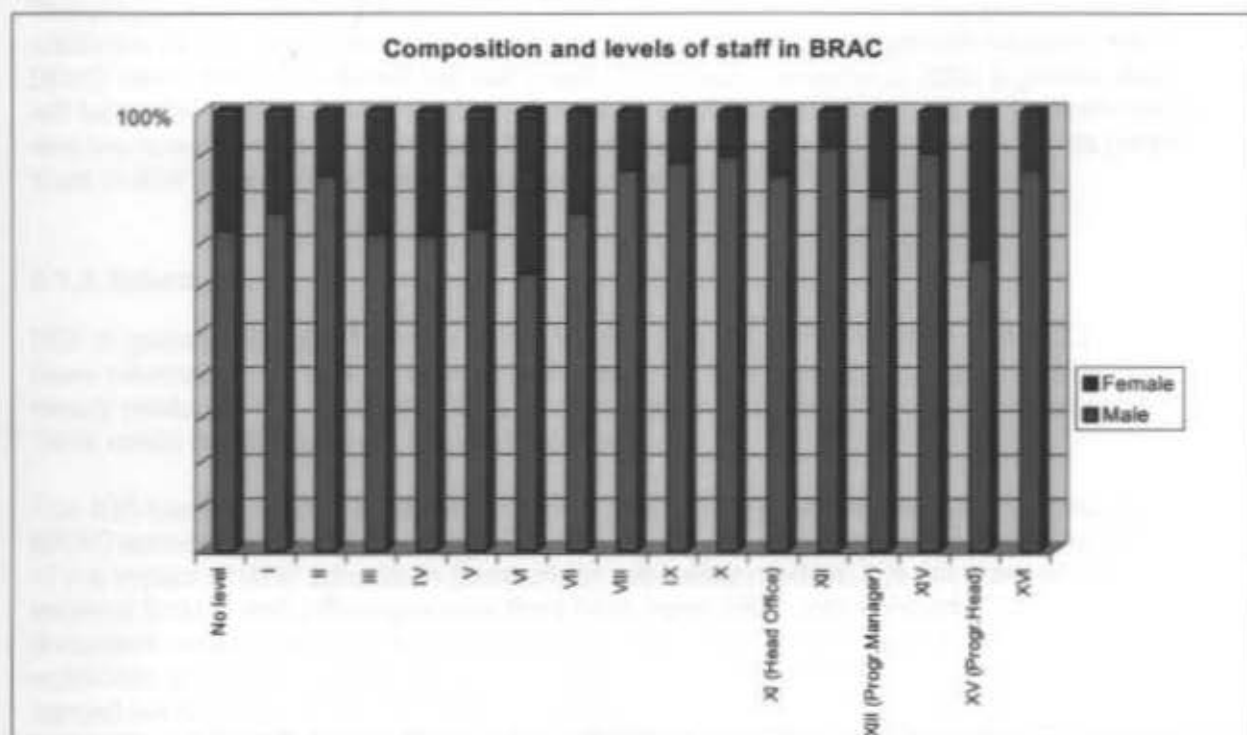
Source: HRD, 2003

The project-staff of BEP, since 2001, is almost entirely made up of women. In 1998 this picture was reversed and 65% of the employees were male. In BEP phase II a recruitment-policy was enforced to change this staff-composition and recruit mainly female employees. This policy has been very effective as in 2001 more than 90% of the project-staff was female. This has further increased to 98.5 at present. At the level of the teachers (who are not presented in these figures), the same image applies; of the total of 33.706 in June 2003, only 569 are men. Also this has been the effect of an active recruitment policy.

The recruitment and HR-policy thus has consciously contributed to significant changes in staff-composition. At the local level (teachers) and at the level of project staff the target was to have a major share of female employees. At the level of the head-office there is a gender-imbalance. Taking into account that the positions at the Head-Office are higher-level and management functions, this means that women in BEP are reasonably represented in the higher positions.

Data provided by HRD, on the overall situation in BRAC (see next page) showed that the situation at that level is not the same as in BEP. Female staff in general constitutes approximately 20% of total staff and they are less represented at the higher functions, especially in the Head Office (level 9 and above).

Table 10: Composition and levels of staff in BRAC



Source: HRD, 2003

BRAC and BEP have an affirmative action policy on recruitment of female employees. This policy has been effective in BEP, with exception to the staff-composition of regular staff in the regional offices. BRAC as a whole is notable that the affirmative action policy didn't have the effect of equal representation of women in the organisation, especially so at the higher positions.

BEP, at the level of teachers and the lowest functional levels, also recruits people without a formal educational degree. At these levels significant investments are made in development of competencies of these employees. The teachers receive an initial training of 12 days and then receive during the 4-year cycle of school continuous monthly follow-up training.

Within the BEP management there is an overall satisfaction with the level of education and experience of the functionaries at the Head Office. At the regional level this is not investigated. BEP has a strict recruitment policy in which all regular and project-staff of the programme principally qualifies to a standard criterion of requirements. During the job-application process candidates are interviewed and checked if they have the knowledge and experience for the specific job.

At the level of the Head Office sufficient capacity exists to analyse socio-economic and gender data. This is also true for the RED Department. In spite of the existing capacity, thorough analysis and interpretation of data is not always done. The IOA-team identified three factors that may account for this:

- Implementation of activities is the major priority and draws the most attention;
- The Management and Information System does not always provide sufficient and timely information to enable analysis and interpretation; and
- The staff needs specific training in interpreting and analysing data (see also under paragraph 10).

The programme head in the Advocacy Unit is responsible for monitoring gender-issues within the BRAC organisation. Her general impression is that the gender-situation within BRAC has not improved over the last years. In the last semester of 2003 a gender audit will be realised within BRAC to obtain information about the present situation, bottlenecks and key action-points for the future. It is interesting to analyse the outcome of this gender-audit in BEP in comparison with BRAC as a whole.

3.7.2. Information

BEP in general has good access to information by (MIS, HRD, FA, MA and RED). For more information on MIS we refer to paragraph 10. The research output of RED is not clearly related to the needs of BEP and as earlier mentioned a list of desired research items made by BEP was not followed-up clearly.

The IOA-team looked at a research carried out by RED on socio-economic impact of BRAC schools (2002). The results of this study show a very mixed and confusing picture of the impact of BEP schools in comparison with other models. It is not clear which external factors and influences over time have been taken into account. The research document could have been better structured. More and better quality research on socio-economic and other impacts of the BEP schools and other BEP-programmes have to be carried out to create a clearer picture. It is important to state that this is only an impression, based only on one report of RED. This might not be the general situation.

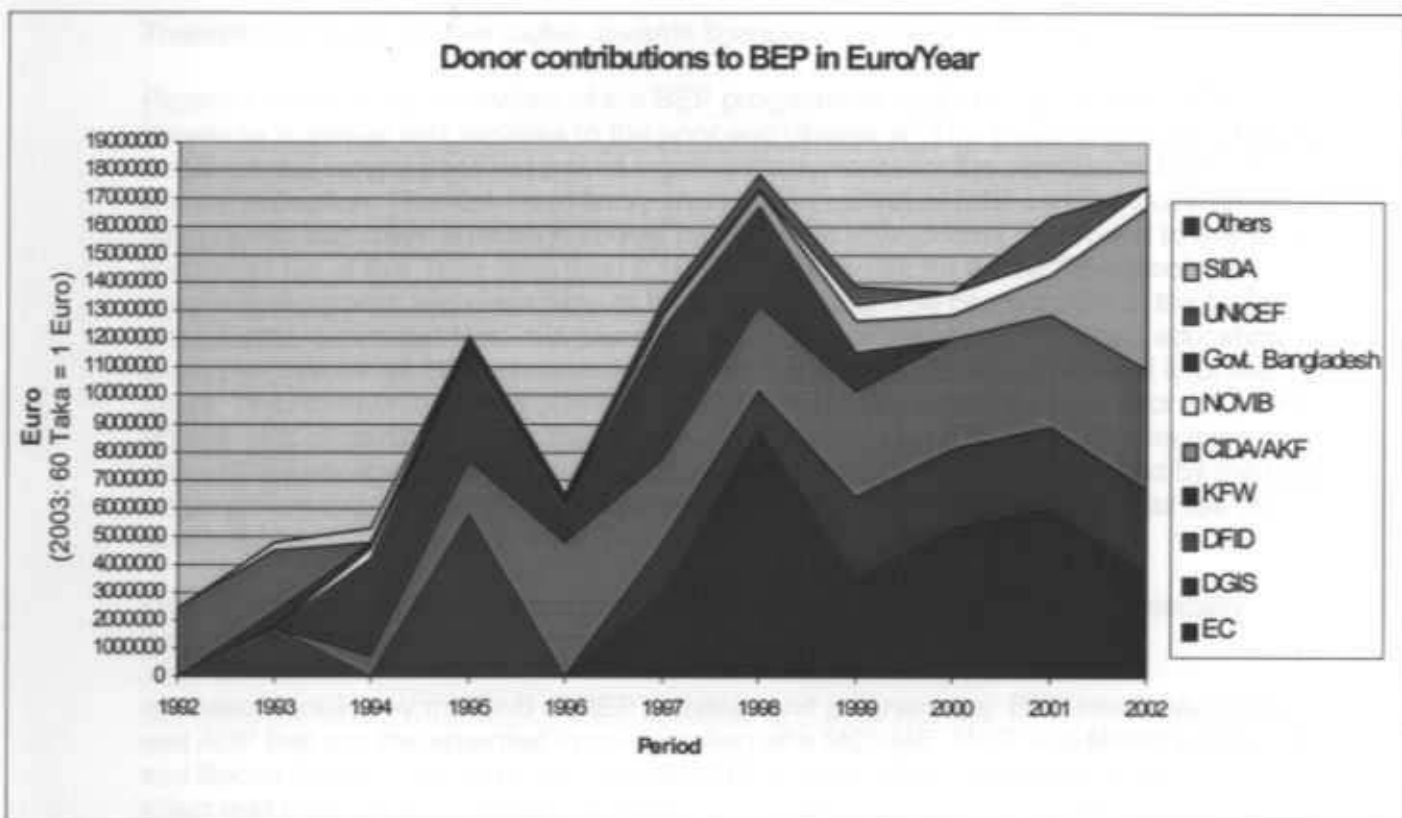
The good relations with MOPME, MOE and Ministry of Youth and Sports, enable BEP to access information from these ministries. CAMPE provides important and independent information on the situation of education in Bangladesh. Especially the yearly Education Watch Reports are a valuable source of information.

3.7.3. Financial inputs

Over the past phases the external funding to BEP has gradually increased to approximately 17.5 million Euro (19.2 million USD) a year, in the present phase III. During the last phase of BEP III the level of external funding has been stabilised. For the next phase the overall five-year budget is approximately 113 million Euro (125 million USD) or 22.75 million Euro (25 million USD) a year. This means that BEP for the next phase foresees a significant increase of donor funding of about 5 million Euro per year. This is partially related to increased planned output (see paragraph 8) in the next phase, but also to quality improvements such as a slight increase in the salaries of teachers. (As they make out an import cost-item of the schools activities, this has a significant effect on the total cost of this programme-component).

At the start of each phase ('92, '96, '99) it is notable that the total level of funding decreases drastically. This is related to the five-year funding-cycle of donor funding of the BEP plans. At the end of each phase, the time required for negotiations and assessments required by donors have caused temporary setbacks in availability of funding. This is particularly sensitive in schools in cycle or commitments of BEP with communities to open new schools. In the past at different moments BEP had to decide to postpone the opening of new schools. See table below for an overview of the funding of BEP over the last phases of BEP.

Table 11: Donor contributions to BEP from 1992-2002



Source: FA, 2003

The present members of the donor-consortium are interested to continue funding BEP, although the trends to the Sector-Wide Approach make it harder for some to justify direct support to NGO's at the medium or long-term. It helps them if the BEP plans clearly spell out how their interventions are complementary and not competing with government efforts. As the budget of BEP phase IV has increased, the present members of the consortium will not be able to cover the whole budget. It is also not sure if all donors are able to maintain their present levels of funding. NORAD has showed interest to join the donor-consortium of BEP, providing additional funding to the donor-consortium contribution. Even so, this still doesn't mean that the total budget of the next phase will be covered entirely.

In order to facilitate discussion and negotiation with the donor-consortium, the management of BEP has decided to prepare the next cycle of BEP phase IV with more anticipation, to avoid gaps in financing between the present and the next phase and to have more time for proper assessments and negotiations. 18 months before the start of the next phase in June 2004 the first draft of the BEP 2004-2009 was shared with donors. This period provides sufficient time to have preliminary discussions with the donors and to realise the necessary assessment missions. In October 2003 the donor-consortium will meet to discuss the outcomes of the appraisal missions and define their future (level of) support as well as points of attention and if necessary conditions to the funding of the next phase. In case the budget of BEP phase IV is not be covered, additional discussions might be needed. It is a good initiative of BEP to anticipate this process.

3.7.4. Long-term financial sustainability

Theoretically there are five routes towards financial sustainability of BEP:

Payment for delivery of services of the BEP programmes by the target-groups: BEP targets its activities and services to the poor and ultra-poor. The financial position of these target-groups clearly does not permit significant payments for the services of BEP in the area of education. The IOA-team firmly shares the position of BEP and the Government of Bangladesh that basic education should be delivered without cost. BEP used to ask for a very small fee of five Taka (less than 0.10 USD) per month for the NFPE-schools to ensure commitment and ownership of the target-groups. The poorest 30% of the target-groups were exempted from this payment. In the light of the vision that basic education should be free for all, BEP is not enforcing this fee and has decided to cancel it for the future. The community contributes significantly in kind by offering the space for the NFPE-schools and by participating in the School Management Committees. While the main share of the services in the basic education programmes cannot be supported by the local target-groups there might be specific elements that could be offered for a small fee (for example borrowing a book from a library).

Overall, considering the situation of the target-groups of BEP, financial sustainability through target-groups cannot and should not be a way.

Increased funding by the GoB of BEP activities and programmes: BEP initiatives in GPU and ADP that are implemented in co-operation with MOPME, MOE and Ministry of Youth and Sports do not yet generate income for BEP to reach financial sustainability. The only effect until now is that a small part of the costs of these projects is shared by the government (e.g. 90% payment of teachers in community schools). It is not likely that these contributions will rise, simultaneously with increased operation of these activities. There has not yet been any indication by the GoB to fund the (current) main element of BEP's activities: the NFPE-schools. The road towards increased government-funding for BEP's activities is long and hazardous, although current GPU and PACE activities show potential opportunities.

Maintain the level of external donor funding: at present the donor-contributions make the lion-share of the BEP budget. Although the commitment of the donors with the programmes of BEP is high and it is likely that for the short- and medium term will maintain a high level, in the long-term it is likely that these contributions will decrease. On the one hand, because donors will increasingly apply the Sector Wide Approach and work through the government structures (ideally there should then also be a mechanism of flow of these donor-funds to all relevant actors in this sector). The perspective of long-term financial sustainability of BEP is not very realistic.

Increase the contribution of BRAC's own income-generating activities and enterprises: In paragraph 4 it was already shown that BRAC is generating significant own resources by these activities and enterprises. The long-term strategy of BRAC is to reach total financial sustainability. This is done through expanding the income generating activities and enterprises and therefore at the short-term BRAC is only contributing to BEP in a very modest way. For the next phase BRAC's contribution doubles but it will still be very modest. For the long-term, however this contribution can become very significant. This strategy requires discussion and negotiating within BRAC.

Explore options for more co-operation and contributions from the private sector: Social responsibility of the private sector is becoming an important new theme in the development sector and several networks and initiatives in this area have been set up.

The IOA-team is not aware of initiatives in this area in Bangladesh. Social responsibility of the private sector both applies to national enterprises and international enterprises investing in the country. BEP has already explored forms of co-operation with the private sector in relation to specific projects. However the full potential of this concept has not yet been explored. BRAC's culture as a highly efficient and cost-effective organisation makes a good fit with the entrepreneurial sector and there probably is potential for partnerships that go beyond the simple mechanism of sponsoring (that in itself can also be interesting). The IOA-teams believes that if BRAC would take leadership in this theme, social responsibility of the private sector could also gain impulse.

A strategy of BEP towards financial sustainability will have to combine the last four elements, as payment for services is relevant in strengthening ownership, but not in terms of financial sustainability.

The IOA-team didn't detect a great concern within BEP about the future financial sustainability and there are no innovative strategies defined. The main strategy remains directed to continue to acquire external donor funding.

3.8. Output of BEP

3.8.1. General analysis of output

The outputs of BEP education activities are clearly stated in the objectives of each programme component. The outputs are defined in quantitative and qualitative terms and are based on previous experiences and trends. Each output is clearly directed to well-defined and specific target-groups.

After a period of fast expansion of activities, outputs and coverage in Phase I and II of BEP, the number of NFPE-schools was consolidated in phase III and this number will be maintained for the next phase, with an internal shift towards more ESP-run NFPE-schools. The activities in the other components show a gradual and modest expansion, several pilots of the past phase will be upgraded in BEP phase IV. For a detailed description of the development of the output of BEP during the last phases and the projections for phases to come the IOA-team refers the BEP phase IV project document.

BEP in phase III increased its attention towards quality of its output by appointing quality assistants and increased efforts of the EDU to improve quality of the materials produced. BEP states that continuous attention to improving quality of output is needed. The measures taken in the last phase will receive continuous attention in the next phase. There are no additional or special interventions in BEP phase IV.

Education quality in BEP schools is remarkable given its modest cost and reliance on local teachers who receive only basic training prior to teaching. The knowledge transfer in BEP schools is better than in government primary schools, with more room for improvement. The Education Watch report 2002 showed that Government schools need 6-7 years to reach sustained literacy, in BEP schools this figure is 4-5.

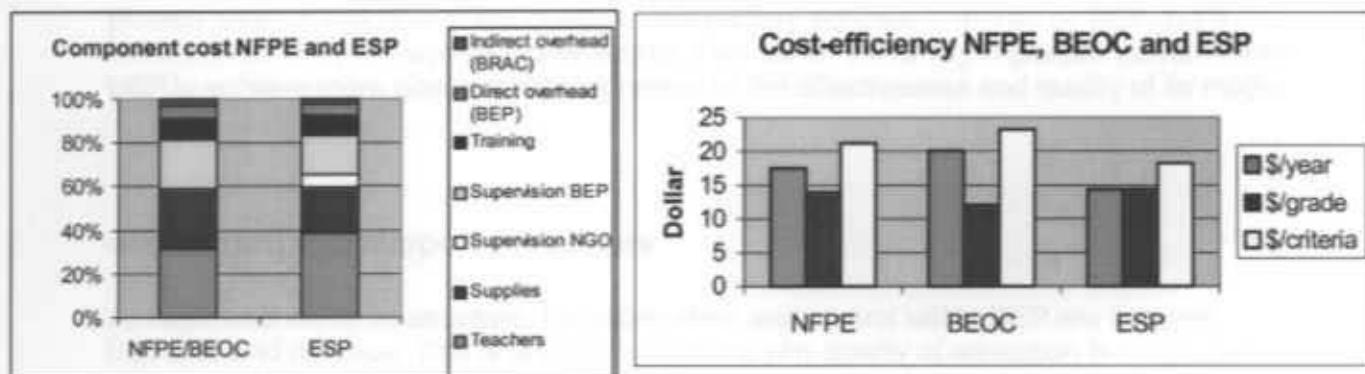
The cycle in most BEP schools is year-round and contains around 630 contact hours per against that of 450 contact hours per year of government primary schools. 5 grades are covered in four years. While net-output in terms of contact-hours may be similar, BEP reaches out to the poorer families, with less educated mothers and therefore to pupils with a more challenging start and learning environment. Moreover literacy and other well quantifiable outcomes are probable not the most important life skills transferred in BEP schools. Own observations of the IOA-team are in line with BEP perception that its students are more confident, assertive and creative than students that are attending government primary schools.

3.8.2. Input-output relation (efficiency)

The average cost per student per year for NFPE and BEOC schools is around 19\$, close to the government efficiency, although the latter might be an inflated figure disregarding several overheads. BEP schools are attractive for parents and pupils as the schools are often nearer, cheaper (more supplies and no need for tutoring outside the class), and provide comparatively child-friendly and effective education (both intellectually and in life skills), resulting (most importantly) in almost full retention of students. In terms of efficiency per grade BEP stands out more positive and comparable then other NGO's, with a cost below 14\$/grade (as BEP schools cover up to 5 grades in 3 years). In terms of cost-effectiveness BEP further distinguishes itself, as the exam results of BRAC students outdo those of graduates from government primary schools.

The various BEP school models present variable efficiencies and cost-effectiveness, as the figures below show. In the ESP programme a high emphasis is put on cost-efficiency. ESP schools save on materials delivered to the students (e.g. by rotating books, and relying on parents to buy pencils), and pay the implementing NGO's considerably lower salaries than its own project staff (enhancing high turn-over of NGO PO's or NGO's topping-up PO salaries). The percentage of total overhead costs in ESP is comparable to the NFPE/BEOC schools (see table 'Component cost').

Table 12: Comparison of cost-efficiency in NFPE, BEOC and ESP schools
Source: BEP, MIS 2003



In spite of lower numbers of students and more supervisors per teacher, ESP schools are more cost-efficient in terms of cost per year, but more expensive than NFPE and BEOC schools in cost per grade (first and second column in 'Cost-effectiveness' table). As the ESP schools cover 3 grades rather than 5 grades in 3 years their cost-effectiveness in terms of reaching certain basic education criteria is higher (research by S.R. Nath, RED, 2002), particularly for girls. The last column of the below table shows cost/criteria, a rather doubtful calculation, which however indicates that it is hard to give final judgement on the cost-effectiveness of the various models.

The various other components of the BEP phase IV proposal follow roughly the same detailed and budgeting principles and procedures, although the libraries deserve special attention as they intend to establish financial self-sufficiency in one to two years. Successes in this respect may be used in other education programmes, not so much to significantly reduce the dependence on external funding, but as a mechanism to strengthen local ownership.

3.8.3. Output-outcome relation (effectiveness)

Outputs of other programme components, such as ADP, PRIME and PACE that are more focussed on qualitative aspects are harder to measure. Also the impact of the primary education models (as said above) in qualitative terms are more difficult to measure. The relation between output and outcomes (let alone long-term impact) are influenced by many factors. This is clearly shown in the Socio-economic Impact study of BRAC Schools by RED (2002). An instrument that also can be used are questionnaires on client satisfaction of both pupils and parents.

Another parameter that is already been used over a long time is the retention-rate of children in the schools. Changes over time show that this rate has increased until almost 100%. This is a clear sign that the children and parents value highly the education offered by BRAC. Researches, such as SAT-scoring, will have to be improved in order to provide more qualitative information on how children are doing in relation to basic competencies. In these tests, children of BEP schools show better results than in government schools, but the overall picture there is that also in BEP-schools further improvements can be made (the IOA-team refers to other appraisal and assessment reports for more information on this subject).

Recently BEP has received permission to send their children to scholarships exams. BEP is confident that their children will obtain higher scores than children of government schools. It will still take some time before proof of this can be given. This will not only provide another indicator of the quality of the primary education offered by BEP, but if indeed these children receive higher scores it will be an extremely important instrument for BEP to achieve more government recognition of the effectiveness and quality of its model.

3.9. Control and support processes

As described within its structure, the supervision and control within BEP are frequent, intensive and rigorous. This is one of the reasons why quality of education is continuously improving. Various BRAC divisions immediately research variations in outcomes. The following sections are engaged in ensuring and scrutinising education performance:

Unit	Superior	Aspect	Scope	Example
MIS	BEP	Quantitative data collected through reporting	All	Number of schools, numbers of girls in school
MRU	BEP	Qualitative applied data collected through monitors	Random	Clarity of new books Student achievements according to subject based indicators
MA	ED	Quantitative process monitoring	Random	Age, location, timeliness of material delivery, attendance, accounts, client satisfaction
RED	DED	General quantitative and qualitative impact and social change	Random	Socio-economic impact of education

This control is thorough and abundant. In general can be said that control is more focussed on output and efficiency than on quality and effectiveness. In the last years also quality-aspects receive more attention by BEP.

The main challenge is to move from control and to use the control processes to ensure organisational learning. The MIS-system (see next paragraph 10) is an important tool for this.

With regard to financial and administrative control, BEP is strict. There are regulations and mandates defined for decision-making on financial investments that stipulate that the higher level managers have to control the people that request the investments. The mechanisms in place are exemplary for other NGO's.

In the first chapter of this report on external review and appraisal missions it has already been observed that these are very frequent. These missions cover a wide range of aspects of BEP and provide good quality information and control of the BEP programmes. However, these review and appraisal missions tend to accumulate findings and recommendations. In spite of the sheets on which the donors (by DLO) and BEP record all the recommendations, agreement (or not) by BEP and actions for follow-up, the volume is so big that many recommendations are simply forgotten over the years. BEP is eager enough to use and implement those recommendations that fit their requirements and plans, but it might be that some important recommendations less liked by BEP will simply disappear in the process.

This procedure has two limitations: a) cumulative learning from reviews and appraisals by BEP and the donors does not sufficiently take place because of the lack of linkages between many reports; b) the sheer volume and variety of recommendations makes it difficult to prioritise the most important or urgent ones.

3.9.1. Effectiveness of support processes

The procurement, accounting and finance procedures are well defined, and efficient.

The process of procurement against a budget line is as follows: To buy any materials beyond petty cash limits, the department head has to file a request which is checked by accounts to see whether there is sufficient budget provision. Staff have the liberty to approve up to 10% over-expenditure, provided there is no general over-expenditure by the programme concerned. Once approved procurement obtains the goods, and accounts pays the bills, charging them against the balance of the concerned department.

Salaries are sent to the regions and areas, where Team in Charges and the accountant see to the payment to staff. Centrally HRD administers data such as recruitment, promotion and transfer of staff. Two years ago their input was automated, and they have a direct link to FA, that automatically updates payment requirements. The Finance and Account Unit reports directly to the BRAC Chairman.

If the BEP programmes want to procure materials for more than ??Taka one and ten million, they have to collect three quotations or float an open tender respectively, in which the BRAC enterprises (such as the printing press) can take part as any other supplier. Thus BRAC enterprises do not compete in an unfair way with other companies.

The TARC's and the BCDM's deliver services to all BRAC programmes as well as to external clients. Roughly 70% of their services are to BEP, 20% to other programmes, and the remaining to paying clients. The services to BEP are accounted on actual cost of salaries (monthly the TARC's report how much they worked for which programme), and fixed rates for accommodation and food. With the external clients the TARC's and BCDM's make profit, but do not pay tax as in Bangladesh training (school, universities) is VAT exempted.

FA is also responsible with inventory control up to regional level, whereas the checking of stocks and dispatches at area level is decentralised to the regions.

To comply with EC regulations BEP budget overhead costs at 7%, but they actually slightly exceeded 9% last year. This includes both so called direct and indirect costs, which fully correspond to BEP (e.g. staff and vehicles) or are pooled between programmes (such as the HRD and FA personnel).

These procedures, rules and regulations are all materialised in document and thus are transparent to staff as well as donors or other external stakeholders.

Earnst & Young Malaysia annually audits all BRAC programmes, approving it and giving minor recommendations. In May 2003, the observations and recommendations were:

- Discrepancies exist between MIS reports and composition of students at school visits
- Incorrect maintenance of fixed assets register
- Accountants' salary in the area not apportioned accurately, but charged against only one single programme (whereas they serve all programmes active in the area)
- Lack of effective and systematic stock management practices at Central Store

Such shortcomings are addressed and checked during the subsequent audit.

3.10. Systems

3.10.1. Management Information System

BEP has a small group of dedicated people (5) that develop and operate the BEP management information system since 1993. It includes comprehensive information on all BEP components as well as other activities (BRAC funded or non-BEP-donors funded). It contains information on students, teachers, schools, libraries and so on. Gender disaggregated information is incorporated in the system. A great amount of data related to

poverty is available from village surveys but as hard copies only and are therefore currently of no use for identification of trends or policy analysis.

The system is fully up to date. The reliability of data seems to be reasonably good. Each month reports are submitted by the TIC to the RM and from there to head office, where data are processed. MIS reports are then returned to the RM and TIC for verification. A standard set of informative reports is monthly submitted to BEP managers and the various sections. Likewise a set of standard tables is supplied for the quarterly reports.

The processing of all reports is centrally done and this is a great burden on the shoulders of MIS staff. Encoding of data occupies most of their time. Decentralisation of data encoding could only be realised by equipping the regional offices with computers. This would not only streamline data processing, but once the offices are hooked up to the Internet, field managers could also be given remote access to the MIS. They could then view and retrieve any kind of information they are interested in about BEP (currently they only receive the MIS reports on their own region). Information access is limited due to ad-hoc approach in development of the database and software applications and lack of ICT facilities. In fact, there is just one computer where the MIS can function in its full scope and all information is distributed by printing it from this single unit. This has made this highly centralised MIS highly inaccessible, inflexible and increasingly difficult to expand.

At the moment the system is undergoing major modifications. At the time of visit the MIS was being restructured and redesigned, with assistance from an external consultant. Also procedures and processes for managing and operating the MIS are changed and it is expected that within 6-8 months a total system overhaul will have been accomplished. Also new data (currently only on paper available) will be included in the system, including geographical information (mapping).

The MIS carries a wealth of information, which is very useful for general planning and for research purposes. Especially since it contains data going back to 1993, it would be interesting to research on how statistical trends are interrelated and how they relate to programme interventions, so that these could be statistically supported. Furthermore, the MIS allows one to check if programme targets are met. In other words, the system is of great value for research for policy analysis, as well as for planning and monitoring. The IOA-team has the impression that the MIS is under-utilised. Reasons are inaccessibility of the system, as described above, the workload of MIS staff (to be reduced by decentralisation) and lack of experience in data interpretation for policy analysis of managers in general.

In general BEP seems to be embracing information and communication technology. It has a LAN in place, a web-site, email/internet-access and of course the MIS. Employees have received some training on application software. ICT may have a major impact on the way the organisation operates, as nature and scope of communications and learning increase, and streamlines operating and processes. While the use of computers is gradually expanding and its impact grows, the need for an ICT policy becomes apparent.

With these measures, BEP is giving follow-up on several recommendation of the Mid Term Review mission in 2001. However, these different actions are not integrated in a policy or Master Plan.

3.10.2. Monitoring

Mention has been made already of the various control and monitoring systems, both internal and external. Much emphasis is placed on accountability of staff and on the standard execution of program activities and quality-issues are increasingly addressed by the Quality Assistants, appointed during BEP, phase IV.

The following measures are in place: supervision of field staff by regular and random site visits (as described under the section on structure); reports from the MIS – mainly quantitative information; monitoring by BEP monitors – mainly performance of teachers; BRAC monitoring department and occasionally RED through its research on impact.

With such strong emphasis on implementation the monitoring system functions well. For monitoring on programme level it is questionable if it serves its purpose fully, as this requires data-analysis as mentioned above and drawing consequences for programme implementation and even policy development. As all of this information is only available at central level, programme planning will be centralised until regional and local managers are sufficiently capacitated.

3.11. Staff performance

In April 2002 an external team of consultants on human resource management visited BEP. Since then, a number of measures are being implemented or were already in the process of being implemented. While this IOA-team would agree with some recommendations, it would oppose some others (for instance the creation of a position of a director for HRM and one for HRD). Below some specific findings (additional to the earlier human resource mission) by the IOA-team relating to BEP are described. BEP works with three main categories of staff, namely the local teachers (they are not formally considered as staff, but are monitored by HRD and FA), temporary project staff and permanent regular staff (employed after a first year of probation).

Noteworthy is that BEP receives yearly well over 300 guests and among them PhD students and researchers, which greatly contribute to the organisation and international learning and exchange.

3.11.1. Career development

Inflow of staff is normally only at PO level through public advertising, and directed by HRD in Dhaka. However sometimes KS and PS can occasionally sit for an exam while no open advertisement has taken place, to fill a few places. After this the career perspective with BEP is to become a master-trainer and then TiC. After TiC one may become QAS, RSS, UM, or monitor. In the next step all these functions lead to the position of RM, which is the last step towards Dhaka.

Lateral transfers (to e.g. the health programme) are not common at these levels, but may occur in managerial positions. Head office sometimes recruits outsiders for technical functions in the units and sections, or hires consultants for this purpose. This creates the second possible inflow into BEP. Most higher functions are filled through promotions, although recently increasingly more higher staff is also recruited from outside. Thus

almost all staff in management positions have extensive grass root experience. This is a great strength, but might also enforce the somewhat internal orientation the team perceived in BEP. Since BEP is large and performs well, it is easy to discard the external world, or even the other programmes. We believe that attracting more external staff could help BEP to stay fresh and inspired at all levels.

3.11.2. Recruitment and selection

Considering the above, recruitment takes mostly place at field level functions. Field offices indicate the minimal requirements (gender, years of schooling and experience and technical background), where vacancies are centrally dealt with HRD does the recruitment and selection based on a test, including an orientation under auspices of the nearest TARC. Selected men may be placed anywhere in the country (although their current home address is considered), but for women BRAC applies a policy to only assign them near their home.

The staff turnover rate is about 7% and has been decreasing over the years. Although BEP itself would prefer a still lower staff turnover, this IOA-team believes that the present rate is healthy and could even be more actively managed. Staff could be assisted in looking outside BRAC for further career development perspectives and at the same time it could continue to scout for new employees at all levels.

3.11.3. Appraisal, training and development

The HRD staff development is to some extent systematised. New PO's receive after their orientation training 3-5 general training-courses a year, and a number of programme related courses on top of that. A fixed sequence of training-courses lasts for four years, after which there are again four years of training related to the next management position (TiC), and subsequently RM. As an employee and being part of the system, there is not yet enough focus on personal needs for development. Although the appraisal system is being revised (the new staff appraisal form introduced last year requires a signature of the appraised), thus far staff have been assessed by their superiors but generally didn't receive feedback, let alone the specific training they need to improve their performance or address lacking skills.

The standardised approach to development allows BRAC to train large groups and in a manageable period of time, but at the same time with the risks that certain personal needs or lacks of skills are not adequately addressed.

This IOA-team believes that the key to top performance is in having good feedback mechanisms in place, through transparent appraisals, individual coaching, participatory meetings and teamwork. This type of HRM may be strengthened, but would require training of BTD personnel, who can further disseminate refined personal skills through the organisation. As part of such training it could also be decided how to (pilot) improve coaching practice within BEP: Through the management line, or through (half) yearly coaching by TARC trainers. The key issue is to develop a way so that coaching (helping others to define their weaknesses, aspirations and action plans) becomes a "way of life", part of the BEP culture (merely establishing the ability will be insufficient). Documenting of coaching interviews (career desires, agreements) is useful for all parties involved.

In terms of meetings the challenge is to make them more participatory. Another challenge is to go beyond planning and programme focussed work, which is obviously not to be neglected, but also into comprehensive (rather than haphazard) problem analysis.

3.11.4. Culture

It is most amazing and wonderful to see the BRAC culture of goal commitment and values function well (while it does not depend on religious binding, or overt quotation and pictures of the Chairman). Our findings are that in general the women are a little bit more satisfied with their situation than BEP men, the overall level of satisfaction is high.

There is great level of discipline in the organisation at all levels, which shows in many small details (e.g. the queuing in front of the elevator at head office in the morning). It is the missions feeling that people work very hard (some being on the verge of maybe of *working too hard*) and yet a lot of informal interaction takes place among people. Staff at all BEP levels, from managers to teachers is confident and outspoken and eager to learn.



4. Conclusions and Recommendations

The conclusions and recommendations presented in this Chapter are based on the description and analysis of the BRAC Education Programme (see chapter 3). In order to facilitate the understanding of each conclusion we refer to the respective paragraph in the description and analysis (however, as some conclusions have no recommendation and others have more, the numbering of the recommendations do not correspond to the paragraphs).

One issue is very central to the overall aspects not only of BEP but the society of BRAC as a whole. This issue is presented immediately below:

Long-term strategy of BEP and the future of the NFPE-model

Conclusion: The new long-term vision of BEP to become a network of education resource centres on a regional and national scale in the future, points towards a different direction than the past phases and phase IV of BEP, where the position is envisioned as mainly providers of basic primary education. The present position of BEP, where focus primarily is on large-scale implementation of primary education models, would change drastically in the long-term future. This new vision is not yet elaborated and translated in clear strategies programmatically as well as financially. The main challenge is how and to whom to effectively transfer the implementation of these models on the long-term.

The new vision is not yet shared and discussed at broader levels within BEP and BRAC; it is merely a provisional statement from the top-management of BRAC. The process of elaborating the new vision is still in its converging stage. (See annex 8 for a description of future scenarios in relation to this new vision)

As this vision of becoming a network of resource centres on education is projected at the long term, not before 2015, it does not have immediate consequences for the strategies and objectives of BEP 2004-2009.

Recommendation 1:

Make time and resources available within BEP to elaborate the new vision on the niche of BEP, the corresponding mission and strategies and discuss and share them at different levels in BEP and BRAC. At the same time the elaboration of the new vision requires a continuous and expanding dialogue with the GoB. The results of such a process will have consequences for the contents of BEP phase V, 2009-2014. THE IOA-team recommends to integrate a plan in BEP phase IV, for continuous actions in vision and strategy-development.

1. External context

Socio-economic, cultural and environmental situation and poverty

Conclusion: BRAC's mission covers all the dimensions (economic, human, security, social-cultural and political) of poverty and BRAC's implementation of programmes contributes significantly to quantitative and qualitative poverty alleviation in Bangladesh.

BRAC's main three programmes are clearly focussed on economic (rural) development, health and education and take into account the socio-cultural and security dimension. Gender and Environment are transversally present in most of the interventions. At the same time BRAC's programmes are targeted to the (ultra-)poor, women and children. The political dimension of BRAC's interventions can be strengthened. The Advocacy Unit, established in 2002 was created to influence public awareness and government policies. Until now it merely focuses on specific issues. BEP/GPU is also exercising advocacy towards the government in the area of education. However, the advocacy approach has not yet reached an integral and institutional level within BRAC.

Political context of BRAC Education Programme

Conclusion: BRAC/BEP can improve its advocacy on important policy-developments that are presently taking place in Bangladesh and that are directly related and important to BRAC's mission in general and the BRAC Education Programme specifically. It is likely that the impact of these future developments will increase and will influence immensely the overall mission and strategies of the different programmes of BRAC.

BRAC/BEP can direct more attention to the following policies and government programmes: Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS); the National Education Policy (NEP), the National Plan of Action "Education for All" and the sub-sector plan on primary education PEDP II. In addition, the important developments in Decentralisation and Public Sector Reform should be taken into account. Finally, the persistent and wide spread phenomenon of corruption within the government needs continuous attention.

As these policy developments and processes are related, monitoring and advocacy requires an integral approach. The co-ordination between advocacy efforts in specific programmes and departments of BRAC must mutually reinforce one another.

Collaboration between GoB and NGO's

Conclusion: BRAC must continue to co-operate with other NGO's and contribute to an effective dialogue between NGO's and GoB to resolve the present dialogue crisis between the GoB and NGO's and the internal crisis within the NGO-sector. The crisis in dialogue between NGO's and GoB can only be resolved when NGO's elaborate a common strategy to approach the government.

The absence of dialogue between NGO's and GoB and the crisis within the NGO-sector has been addressed with the establishment of the Federation of NGO's. This initiative, however, is not endorsed by the whole NGO-community. More co-operation and NGO-NGO dialogue is necessary to resolve this issue. At the same time it is imperative that the Federation of NGO's discuss upcoming new legislation on NGO's. New and more restrictive NGO-legislation will also have consequences for BRAC programmes, although concerning its own relations with the GoB, BEP seems not very much concerned about this threat.

Recommendation 2 (related to the three conclusions above):

Complement the existing issue- and activity based advocacy efforts of BRAC/BEP with a more integral approach and strategy on important policy developments and processes. This calls for a central role for the Advocacy unit and a necessity to link the different advocacy efforts that are taking place at de-central level. Linkages with and contributions to advocacy efforts of the whole NGO-community should receive more prominent attention by BRAC.

2. Main stakeholders of BRAC Education programme

Conclusion: BEP maintains good relations with its main stakeholders of the programme. Within the scope of these ToR it is especially relevant to mention its good relations with local governments, government officials at the local and district level and with the members of the donor-consortium of BEP.

The main instrument of convincing others of the effectiveness, efficiency and relevance of the different educational activities is by involving them in the direct context and partnerships. By witnessing the activities and concrete results other partners can become convinced of the importance of the models. By working together with BEP, partners can build trust in the reliability of BEP. These results have clearly been achieved in relations with local government and local level GoB-officials as well as the donors of BEP.

At the level of the central government, especially with MOPME, the relations are improving, but recognition is until now mainly focussed on non-formal education activities for special target-groups. The main model of BEP, the NFPE-schools, hasn't received sufficient attention and recognition from the GoB. BEP states that over the last years, more openness is encountered within MOPME, MOE and the Ministry of Youth and Sport and possibilities for dialogue are now more apparent.

Recommendation 3:

Explore more possibilities to use the leverage of local governments, government officials and donors in accelerating the dialogue with MOPME. In this dialogues focus on the recognition of BEP's NFPE-model as the 12th type of officially recognised primary education model. Instruments of multi-stakeholder dialogue could be considered to open up further the present, but limited dialogue. The donors of BEP should play a brokering role.

Conclusion: There are differences in understanding between the donors of the consortium and BEP on the issue of quality and client-orientation.

While the general understanding of issues is good, understanding in specific cases could benefit from more discussion and exchange on conceptual issues before defining action points.

Recommendation 4:

Clarify the understanding of the concept of quality and client-orientation by BEP and its donor partners. Then proceed to identify the specific bottlenecks and constraints in relation to quality education. Only then proceed to establish an agenda to address the improvement of quality by defining specific actions.

3. Vision and mission

Conclusion: The BRAC Education Programme contributes to the mission of BRAC by building poor people, especially women's, social, economic, political and human capacities. It also contributes to the capacity development of staff and programme participants. This positions BEP at a central place within the overall BRAC mission.

4. Place of BEP within BRAC

Conclusion: The importance given to BEP in BRAC's mission is reflected in the important place this programme occupies in the society of BRAC.

BRAC shows a commitment with BEP to dramatically increase its own investments in the programme to 50% in the coming 20-25 years. For BEP phase IV the investment of BRAC in the programme has doubled. However, for the following phase BEP remains for the large part dependent on outside funding.

Recommendation 5 (see also recommendation 14):

Develop a clear and transparent long-term strategy towards financial sustainability of BEP. Next to own resources (from profit generating BRAC enterprises) and possibly continued donor funding this plan should consider resources from commercial enterprises, and the possibilities of government partnership.

5. Strategy and main objectives

Process of definition of strategy, goals and targets

Conclusion: The overall strategy of BEP phase IV is formulated in generic terms and doesn't state clearly how each component of BEP contributes to it. At the level of programme components, the elaboration of strategies is done at implementation level, relating activities and output to strategy and to the mission of BEP. This approach doesn't facilitate the process of understanding of the coherence of the programme-components in relation to the overall strategy.

The present practice of discussion, elaboration and decision-making within BEP involves many moments of consultation with many people at the management and implementation level. However, much of this consultation is done in vertical lines, related to the hierarchies of each unit or programme component. It can have a negative impact on ownership and commitment of managers and staff of specific programme-components at the implementation level. In the end this might limit the capacity of clear dissemination of strategies, goals and targets at the regional and local level.

This existing practice should be complemented by other mechanisms that ensure more horizontal and integral strategy formulation and decision making.

Recommendation 6:

Introduce and implement concepts of team-based strategy formulation and decision-making at the top level of BEP, involving managers of all programme components. Decisions on overall strategy and the coherence of the strategies at the programme-level

should be assured by all the managers involved (DED, Programme Heads and Co-ordinators). This could be done within the concept of a management-team.

Two programme-related issues with strategic implications

1. Education Support Programme (ESP):

Conclusion: The strategy of ESP is directed to further expansion. The expansion of this programme is to a large extent dependent on the organisational and institutional capacities of relatively small regional and local NGO's to implement successfully the NFPE-model of BEP. It is exactly in this area where the main bottleneck of this programme is situated. Processes of building institutional and organisational capacities require a long-term perspective and the ESP strategy isn't taking this into account sufficiently.

An earlier review mission of ESP has produced important and useful recommendations to address this issue and this IOA-team adheres fully to these recommendations. It is, however, not clear if and in which degree BEP has given follow-up to these recommendations. In BEP phase IV we cannot see sufficient elements that can account for successful upgrading of the ESP.

Recommendation 7:

Develop a strategy for ESP with a long-term perspective. This strategy should include more emphasis on organisational capacity building of the implementing partner-NGO's. This might be achieved by longer-term commitments with these partners. This could take into account the following model:

ESP establishes fixed period contracts with the implementing partner-NGO's for a period of five to ten years, in which the partner-NGO's commit themselves to increase the scale of implementation of NFPE-schools in a certain period to reach the level required to receive direct funding of their NFPE-programmes. BEP commits itself to provide, in addition to the educational and financial support, a package of services to strengthen the organisational capacities of these NGO's to reach the required stage to be able to implement these programmes and attract donor- or government funding. After the fixed period BEP could provide a certification of these NGO's on a yearly base that qualifies them to attract funding. Yearly audits by BEP can assure that these NGO's continue to comply with quality standards. This strategy would also be in line with the long-term aspiration of BEP to become a resource centre for education.

2. Government partnership Unit

Conclusion: The Government Partnership Unit was created with the goal to expand and improve relations and co-operation with the GoB. However, the GPU focusses on the implementation of activities and on specific issues. This limits the possibility of developing an overall vision and strategy of BEP on co-operation and partnerships with the GoB.

GPU puts in a lot of effort and obtains remarkable results (such as the permission for BEP NFPE-graduates to enrol in the scholarship exam and the pre- and post primary programmes). Implementation of joint activities with the GoB certainly should continue and can be organised in a separate unit. However, the present position of GPU as a separate

and vertically organised unit within BEP, does not fully enable the development of a coherent strategy on co-operation with the government at the level of BEP as a whole.

Recommendation 8:

GPU should not so much be seen as a specific issue but should evolve in an overall and binding concept and strategy of BEP as a whole.

6. Structure of BEP**Organisational structure**

Conclusion: The organisational structure suits the implementation of BEP well. It has a reasonable number of hierarchical layers, with low overhead and is flexible through its system of units.

The increasing size and scope of BEP and adaptations of programmes according to newly upcoming needs or external developments have resulted in an increasingly complicated organisational structure. The reasons for establishing new units, their placement in the organisational structure and the long-term perspective of development of these units are not always clear (an earlier mission also recommended to address the increasing complexity of the organisation, but the IOA mission did not observe clear follow-up).

Some apparent complications in the BEP-structure observed by the IOA-team are:

- The situation of the ESP in the BEP structure. The imbalances between BEP, PACE and ESP should be looked into, so that these programmes become more equal partners and reflect their relative importance in the overall strategy of BEP (see also earlier recommendation on ESP);
- The need to integrate the strategy of GPU in the overall strategy of BEP, requires rethinking of the present situation of this unit in the BEP-structure (see also earlier recommendation on GPU);
- The interest of BEP to develop a full scale Youth Development Programme. This could be achieved by developing the current ADP into such a programme (or become part of it).

By these measures, divergence of specific programmes from the core-competencies of BEP could be avoided and differentiation would not become a risk to the programme itself. Core-competencies of BEP identified by the IOA-team during the analysis are:

- Innovation of educational models;
- Targeting models on specific target-groups, especially girls and women;
- Up-scaling of successful models;
- Cost-effective implementation of models;
- Planning, monitoring and control of large-scale operations;
- Management of complex organisations.

Recommendation 9:

Develop a strategy in relation to the long-term possibilities for replication and transferral of successful pilots and new initiatives that is based on the core-competencies of BEP. BEP should elaborate further on its competencies (also considering the contributions of other actors in the sector) and use them as a base for long-term strategy on new initiatives and pilots. This strategy has to be complemented by transferral and mainstreaming strategies of these new initiatives and pilots.

Recommendation 10:

Review the scope of BEP, PACE, ESP and GPU and consider a reorganisation of units for the establishment of more balanced programmes and programme head responsibilities.

Mechanisms for decision-making and co-ordination

Conclusion: BEP has a strong formal (vertical) communication and control system in place that provides the required discipline to carry out such a strong implementation-focused programme in a difficult social setting. Horizontal co-ordination and exchange can be strengthened.

Structural cohesion between units and programmes can complement present existing informal interaction. By establishing horizontal platforms (between the programmes and units) for interaction and shared decision-making at the central and de-central level (regions and districts) BEP could strengthen its learning capacity and streamline co-ordination between units and programmes down to the local level of implementation.

In its endeavours to decentralise the organisation, BEP has made significant progress. Nevertheless, many processes are still centralised even though more and more power is delegated to middle managers. Informally the organisation is even further decentralised, but concepts of participatory decision-making could be institutionalised.

Recommendation 11:

Explore concepts of more team-based co-ordination, exchange and decision-making at the field level to ensure a higher capacity of "self-management" of these teams. For participatory strategic decision-making and action planning BEP is suggested to also consider large-group consultation methods.

7. Inputs of BEP**Human resources**

Conclusion: BEP employs sufficient human resources to implement its programmes cost-effectively.

BEP has an affirmative action policy on recruitment of female employees. This policy ensures gender-balance of the staff in the head-office and conscious policy on recruitment of women at the level of project staff and teachers. Gender imbalance still is found at the level of regular and service staff in the regional and field offices; there the presence of female staff still is very low.

Recommendation 12:

Analyse the situation and possible bottlenecks in under-representation of female and service staff in the regular staff at regional and field offices. If needed, also enforce and strengthen implementation of affirmative action policy at these levels and set concrete quantitative and qualitative targets.

Conclusion: The project-staff of BEP is not included in the statistics of the HR Department. BEP in the regional offices maintains separate statistics and monitoring of this staff. This means that these staff-members are not within the HRD-System.

Recommendation 13:

Include the project-staff of BEP in the HRD-system in order to ensure that these project-staff members can benefit from the same support of HRD. Inclusion of the BEP project-staff is also needed to maintain accurate statistics on the total number of staff in BRAC.

Financial sustainability of BEP in the long-term

Conclusion: BEP has a fairly stable funding base with a variety of donors. The programme components and goals and targets are defined in such a way that they can relatively easily be adapted to specific funding levels.

Apparently BEP is not very concerned with the future funding perspectives, considering the good relations with donors and the long-term perspective of increased BRAC financial resources for BEP.

However, at present BEP is largely dependent on external funding from international donors. In the past, the five-year cycle of external funding of BEP has lead to fluctuations in the programme.

There is no strategy defined to ensure more continuous long-term financial planning and also further diversification of funding has received limited attention.

Recommendation 14 (see also recommendation 5):

Develop a long-term strategy (changing the scope of five-year programmes) on financial sustainability of BEP, including external and BRAC-resources. At the same time also build relations with the (inter)national entrepreneurial sector and developing the concept of social responsibility of the private sector in Bangladesh should be considered. BRAC's culture as an efficient organisation with many commercial experiences, provides a good basis for understanding with this sector.

Alongside the possibilities of diversification of resources, also new, more flexible, mechanisms and arrangements with donors can be made to avoid abrupt fluctuations in funding and enable other funding-partners (including the private sector) to join in at different times.

8. Output of BEP

Conclusion: The output of the BEP programmes is clearly set in quantitative terms. The overall outreach of the different programmes to target-groups is impressive. The BRAC Education Programme is the largest scale programme on primary education implemented by a NGO in the world. The output of the programme in qualitative terms is much more complicated.

The focus of BEP on quality of the output has improved over the last years and receives continuous attention, but it is mainly to ensure better quality of inputs (Quality Assistants, improved curriculum etc.). The output measured in terms of satisfaction of the target-

groups has received less attention. Also impact on the socio-economic situation has not been sufficiently measured.

This impact is difficult to measure, since there are many dimensions and indirectly influencing factors to be considered. The Research and Development Department has to be more involved in providing reliable data on the socio-economic impact of the BEP programmes. These socio-economic impacts can be more closely related to the differences in the base-level situations of the target-groups of BEP (the ultra-poor) compared to this base-level situation of target-groups of other implementers of primary education. Also the impact over time can be taken more into consideration (longitudinal studies). The appraisal mission of BEP phase IV (2003) also addressed this issue.

Recommendation 15:

Realise questionnaires or studies to measure client-satisfaction of the services delivered by BEP to complement the input-related investments in quality and to measure the effects of these investments. Increase the co-operation with and provide reliable MIS-information to RED to enable better quality studies on socio-economic impact of the BEP programmes (SATs, comparative and longitudinal studies).

9. Control and support processes in relation to BEP

Conclusion: The control and support processes are of sufficient quality for a smooth functioning of BEP. The processes within BEP and support departments in BRAC are clearly in place. Goals and targets are clearly monitored and financial control is strict. There are well-defined rules and regulations in relation to financial control and delegation of decision-making. The Human Recourse Department has good records of the employees and with respect to salary-administration is linked to the financial department.

10. Systems relevant for the functioning of BEP

MIS and monitoring

Conclusion: BEP has a potentially powerful educational management information system, which after its current migration to a new ICT platform, is an excellent tool for research, programme management and policy analysis. However, capacity to use these applications effectively needs to be built.

The current MIS has great potential but is technically in poor shape and is centrally operated. As major revisions are going on it is expected that the potential can be realised in the future. A well-functioning ICT infrastructure is a basic condition for MIS to deliver its full potential. The most important benefit will be the increased and timely accessibility to data and reports. Yet, the availability of such data is only fully optimised if they are used for detailed analysis, research, planning and policy-making. While the MIS is one important ICT application, the steady expansion of computer facilities within BEP calls for an overall vision on ICT, to streamline the automation processes and refrain from an ad-hoc approach to development of ICT-infrastructure and services. This issue was also addressed in the MTR-mission of 2001. The IOA-team wants to add two recommendations to that mission.

Recommendation 16:

Formulate (BEP and BRAC) an ICT policy/master plan as a vision, strategy and action plan for future ICT expansions. An important element of this plan can be to equip all regional offices with computers and e-mail/internet facilities, for decentralised processing of data and on-line access to MIS. It is understandable that investments in this area depend in a great deal in availability of resources. Also investments can be shared with the programmes outside BEP (especially BDP). The investments in ICT need to be addressed in funding-strategies.

Recommendation 17:

Training of a selected group of managers and researchers in MIS data interpretation for planning and policy analysis.

11. Staff Performance

Conclusion: In general it can be concluded that the BEP style of management of staff leads to a high level of satisfaction and commitment. Issues on performance management are currently addressed, but improvement may be made on implementing feedback mechanisms for enhanced support and learning.

BEP develops its staff through systematic training, which provides them with competencies for the job and allows them to gradually climb up the hierarchical ladder. This internal focus has led to a strong implementation-rooted workforce and BRAC-dedicated people. Two concerns emerge from this approach. First, traditionally little attention has been paid to applying feedback mechanisms (or coaching) for individual staff. Secondly, the development of the BEP workforce is based on a vertical vision with limited outflow to other BRAC programmes or even other organisations.

Recommendation 18:

Implement feedback mechanisms (appraisals, coaching, meetings) at all levels, relate them clearly to HRD policies, train the managers and finally integrate them in the organisational culture of BEP.



5. Over-all conclusions and recommendations

The objective of the ToR of this Institutional and Organisation Analysis was to *determine whether, from an institutional/organisational point of view, all preconditions are met for BEP to perform and achieve its objectives in education, poverty alleviation, empowerment of poor women and pro-poor advocacy.*

The conclusion of the IOA-team, after having analysed extensively the institutional context and internal organisation of BEP, is that all major preconditions are met by BEP to perform and achieve its objectives. The performance of BEP in planning and realising large-scale and high impact programmes that are clearly targeted to the poor, especially women and children, is outstanding and provides an example for many NGO's, not only in Bangladesh but all over the world. The organisational structure, arrangements, procedures and regulations within BEP and BRAC ensure a cost-effective and transparent functioning of the programmes of BEP, that are highly valued by the stakeholders. The staff of BEP is highly motivated to implement the programmes.

Quality improvement of the programmes receives continuous attention by BEP and requires continuous attention in the future. Improvements can be made, especially in relation to the long-term outcomes and impact of the programmes on target-groups and by developing and applying better instruments to measure outcome and impact.

An important external factor and a continuous theme in the life of BEP is the struggle for Government recognition of its innovative education models, especially the NFPE-schools. This recognition is only very gradually growing and mainly directed to other programmes

than the core-programme of BEP: the NFPE-schools. Further actions to accelerate the dialogue with the Government are necessary and the donors of BEP have to play an active brokering role.

A new long-term vision of BEP has been formulated, but needs to be further developed and shared at all levels of the organisation. This new vision of becoming a network of recourse centres on education in Bangladesh will change significantly the character of BEP in the future and set challenging targets for dialogue with the Government, continuous improvement of quality and future financial sustainability. This new vision does not affect in a great degree the programmes of BEP for 2004-2009.

Recommendations

The IOA-team positively recommends the donors to fund the BEP proposal for 2004-2009.

The IOA-team also recommends that in BEP phase IV, 2004-2009 a plan will be integrated that accounts for continuous actions in the development and sharing of the new emerging vision, mission and strategy (including financial sustainability) within BEP, BRAC and the Government.

The mission recommends to strengthen the practice of giving missions (perhaps less numerous) a limited focus on a clear theme, as this may increase the depth and impact of the missions.

The IOA-team finally recommends BEP and the donors to discuss the recommendations of this IOA-mission (and future missions) and prioritise a limited number of actions for follow-up, however with a commitment to give extensive follow-up to enable shared learning from the experiences.





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Annex 1: List of consulted publications and documents

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Annex 2: List of persons consultants and activities of IOA-team

Saturday	23-8	Education Watch Report launching meeting Appraisal Mission team BEP IV
Sunday	24-8	Mr. Graham White, DLO Mr. Cornelius Hacking, First Secretary Education, RNE
Monday	25-8	Analysis of Documents
Thursday	26-8	Analysis of Documents
Tuesday	26-8	Mrs. Erum Mariam, Programme Head NFPE, BEP, BRAC Mr. Safiqul Islam, Programme Head PACE, BEP, BRAC Briefing with most Units Heads under NFPE and PACE, BEP, BRAC BRAC/donor briefing meeting Mrs. Marjolijn Verhoog, Desk Officer Bangladesh, Novib (realised by a team-member in the Netherlands)
Wednesday	27-8	BRAC NFPE, BEOC, pre-primary and government primary and secondary schools BRAC teachers, area, regional and TARC staff Mr. Ariful Islam, Programme manager Field Operations, BEP, BRAC
Thursday	28-8	Open space workshop Mymensingh Mrs. Mahmuda Aldeen, Assitant DLO, DLO
Friday	29-8	Mr. Yusuf Kassam, Mission leader, BEP IV appraisal mission Analysis of Documents
Saturday	30-8	Mrs. Erum Marian, Programme Head NFPE and Mr. Ariful Islam, Programme manager Field Operations, BEP, BRAC Mr. Kamrul Aman, Senior Faculty Member, BTD Dr. Manzoor Ahmed, Institute Education Development, 19 th floor
Sunday	31-8	Mr. Aminul Alan, Deputy Executive Director (BEP, BDP), BRAC Mr. Abdul-Muyeed Chowdhury, Executive Director, BRAC Mr. Ariful Islam, Programme manager Field Operations, BEP, BRAC
Monday	1-9	Open space workshop Rajendrapur NGO leaders involved in ESP
Tuesday	2-9	Mr. Prof. A.M. Mossaddequ; Islam, Director General, Directorate of Primary Education, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education, GoB, Mr. A.K.Abdul Muktedir, Director Planning and development and prof. Md. Sultan Mia, Director Training.

		<p>Mr. Shahidul Hasan, Programme Coordination Field Operation, BRAC Afghanistan Programme Mrs. Samira Kamil Tharani, Education Programme Officer, Aga Khan Foundation Mrs. Dr. Rokeya Khanam, Education manager, DFID Mrs. Syeda Rafia, Head of Human Resources Division, BRAC Mr. Shunil, Programme Coordinator ESP, BEP, BRAC Mrs. Sheeps Hafiza, Programme Head Human Rights & Gender, Advocacy Unit BRAC Mr. Cornelius Hacking, 1st secretary, Royal Netherlands Embassy</p>
Wednesday	3-9	<p>Mrs. Amanda Edmunds, Third Secretary (Development) and Mr. Robin Ruggles CIDA Mr. Monwer Hossain Khundkar, Programme Manager and A.Z. M. Sakhwat Hossain, GoB Partnership Unit, BEP, BRAC Mr. Fazlul Hoque, Programme Coordinator, Training Division, BRAC Mrs. Erum Marjan, Programme Head NFPE, BEP, BRAC Mr. Shih Narayan Kairy, Head of Finance & Accounts, BRAC Mr. Tajul Islam, NGO Federation</p>
Thursday	4-9	<p>Mr. Ariful Islam, Programme manager Field Operations, BEP, BRAC Mrs. Tasneem Ghafoor Ahar, dept. director and Mr. Enamul Hoque Dep. Manager, CAMPE Mrs. Laila Baque, EC Report Writing</p>
Friday	5-9	Report Writing
Saturday	6-9	Report Writing
Sunday	7-9	<p>Report Writing, preparation of workshop on preliminary results mission Mrs. Erum Marjan, Programme Head, NFPE/BEP, BRAC</p>
Monday	8-9	BRAC workshop on pre-liminary findings
Tuesday	9-9	<p>Mr. Abed, Chairman, BRAC Presentation main findings mission to donors</p>
Wednesday	10-9	<p>Mr. Md. Golam Samdari Fakir, Director Training Division, BRAC Report writing</p>
Thursday	11-9	<p>Report writing Mr. Graham White and Mrs Mahmuda Aileen, DLO:BRAC</p>
Friday	12-9	Report writing
Saturday	13-9	<p>Report writing Submission draft final report</p>

Annex 3: ToR Institutional and Organisation Analysis of BEP

(25 June 2003)

Terms of Reference**INSTITUTIONAL & ORGANISATION ANALYSIS
of the
BRAC EDUCATION PROGRAMME (BEP)****1. INTRODUCTION**

BRAC's Non-Formal Primary Education programme (NFPE) has been operating since 1985. It is one of BRAC's three core programmes (rural development, education and health) aimed at poverty reduction and social empowerment in rural communities, with special target emphasis on poor girls who have either never been to school or who have dropped out of the formal education system. Originally the NFPE programme focused on children aged 8 to 10 years and followed a three-year cycle covering Grades I to III. In 1988 this was extended to include children aged 11 to 14 years; this part of the programme became known as Basic Education for Older Children (BEOC). A further development took place in 1991 when the Education Support Programme (ESP) was started, seeking to extend the coverage of the NFPE model to areas in Bangladesh where BRAC was less well represented by operating through small partner NGOs supported technically and, in most cases, financially by BRAC.

From the start the NFPE programme was part of BRAC's main rural development programme but it acquired the status of a separate core programme in 1996. Until 1993 it was supported by a varying group of donors but since then it has received a major boost following the formation of the present donor consortium consisting of AKF/CIDA, DFID, the EC, the Royal Netherlands Embassy (RNE), NOVIB, and UNICEF. Funding from this consortium over the last ten years has been in three phases during which the programme has increasingly widened in size and scope as follows:

Phase I (1993-1996): During this phase BRAC scaled up its activities, more than doubling the number of schools from 15,000 to 31,000. It also consolidated its management infrastructure and further developed its support systems for teachers. New initiatives in this period included the creation of Resource Teachers, opening Reading Centres/Union Libraries/Adult Literacy Centres, plus schools for ex-garment workers in conjunction with UNICEF, ILO and BGMEA.

Phase II (1996-1999): After the rapid growth of the programme in Phase I, this phase represented a stage of stabilisation and consolidation, with the emphasis on qualitative improvements across all areas of operation.

Key areas were materials and curriculum development, staff training, pedagogical support for teachers and management effectiveness. New initiatives included the piloting of Grades IV & V in NFPE schools, development of innovative programmes such as CLIP, IRI and CLE, and the piloting of pre-primary programmes.

Phase III (1999-2004): This phase continued the emphasis on quality both at HQ under a newly formed Educational Development Unit and at field level through an extended management and administrative structure comprising Resource Teachers, Batch Trainers, Master Trainers, and Quality Assurance Specialists. Greater impetus was also given to Phase II initiatives namely, the introduction of Grades IV & V in NFPE schools, to pre-primary schooling, the adolescent development programme, and the sustainability of Union Libraries, piloting of IT and mobile libraries under the continuing education programme. A major effort was initiated to obtain closer collaboration with GoB in primary and post-primary education. Effort was also made to provide equitable access to ethnic minority communities through non-formal primary and post-primary interventions.

2. MISSION OBJECTIVES

The objective of the Mission is to determine whether, from an institutional/organisational point of view, all pre-conditions are met for BEP to perform and achieve its objectives in education, poverty alleviation, empowerment of poor women and pro-poor advocacy.

The appraisal will be based upon an analysis of the institutional and organisational activities of those parts of BRAC that have an impact on BRAC's education programme. It will follow the methodology of the Integrated Organisation Model that was outlined at the BRAC/Donor Consortium bi-annual meeting in November 2002; this model will be the guiding principle for the analysis by the Mission.

4. ISSUES FOR APPRAISAL

Based on the Integrated Organisation Model, the factors that influence BRAC/BEP as an organisation and need to be considered by the review team are:

4.1 External Factors

- How does the social, cultural, political and ecological environment influence the outcomes of the organisation?
- How are poverty, gender, empowerment and pro-poor advocacy included in the national policy?
- What is the state of GO-NGO and NGO-NGO collaboration? What further developments can be foreseen in the near future?
- Which stakeholders does the organisation work with (e.g. national/local government, NGOs that are active in and outside the sector, Ministry of Primary and Mass Education and/or other Government Ministries, the target group and the donor community)? What is their appreciation of BRAC?

4.2 Internal Factors

Nature of the organisation

- What is the legal basis of the organisation?
- What is the legal framework (laws, by-laws, regulations that may have an effect on the functioning of the organisation)?

Strategy/objectives of the organisation

- Give a description of the organisation, including its strengths and weaknesses, its opportunities and threats (SWOT).
- What are the long- and short-term objectives? How are the objectives internalised?
- What is the output of the organisation in relation to the objectives (the quality, quantity, experience, specialisation, coverage of the target group)?
- How are goals and targets defined? Are the set goals and targets disseminated /informed/owned by the staff of different tiers?

Structure of the organisation

- What is the structure of the organisation (including organisational chart)? How is it appreciated by the staff? How is it appreciated by the Mission?
- Describe the sections/units within the organisation and their roles and responsibilities.
- Is there a mechanism in place to secure coordination between sections/units?
- How is the decision-making process (at what level, dependency, formal and informal)?
- Give a description of the level of decentralisation of decision-making. How are women involved in decision-making? Do criteria for poverty, gender and/or environment play a role in decision-making? Is attention paid to voice poverty and gender advocacy, and if not, how could it be improved?

Inputs

- How is the distribution of staff within the organisation (quantity, quality, male-female ratio, permanent/temporary)?
- Does the organisation have enough qualified personnel to have access to socio-economic and gender sensitive data and to be able to identify and research this?
- How is the access of the organisation to relevant information (research, government)?
- What is the financial situation (income and expenditure as well as the balance sheet) in recent years and what are resources of finance (GoB/Donors/members)? Indicate if the financial input from each source is increasing or decreasing.
- How are the financial sustainability issues being addressed? How to further improve the financial sustainability in a feasible way?

Outputs

- Give a short description of the achievements of the organisation until today.
- How are the outputs appreciated by its clients, in quality and quantity?
- Give an appreciation of the outputs in relation to the inputs.

Control and support processes

- What are the control processes (focused on control of other processes?) and how effective are they? Pay specific attention to administrative organisation, internal and external monitoring reviews, reporting and internal control, approval of the audits.
- What are the support processes and how effective are they? Pay specific attention to financial administration, account management, budget control, liquidity management, obligations and procurement.
- How transparent are these processes?
- How are the competencies for financial commitments and payments (authorisation and execution)?

Systems

- Does a management information system exist and, if yes, how does it function?
- Does a monitoring & evaluation system exist and, if yes, how does it function?
- Is poverty and gender-disaggregated information available in these systems?
- Do financial reporting systems exist and, if yes, how do they function?
- Do accounting systems exist and, if yes, how do they function?
- Do procurement systems exist and, if yes, how do they function?

Human resource management

- Make an assessment of the accountability of staff members.
- Does the organisation have an HRD unit? If yes, how does it function and what needs to be done for further improvement?
- What is the personnel policy (recruitment, termination, motivation)? Does affirmative action for women exist and, if yes, how does it function?
- How are women represented at the senior levels of management?
- Are there vacancies and is this perceived as a problem? Is there a surplus of staff?
- How is the staff turnover?
- What are the transfer policies?
- What are the training facilities? Is training adequate to improve/maintain the quality of the service? Are poverty, gender and/or environment issues included in the training?
- What kinds of incentives are used?

In consultation with the Mission Team Leader, the consultants will have the freedom to include and analyse any other linked issues that they decide would be relevant.

A stakeholder workshop of one/two day(s) is expected as part of the IOA (following an IOM model).

4. COMPOSITION OF THE MISSION

The Mission will comprise a team consisting of two consultants both of whom will be specialists in institutional and organisation analysis. One of them will be appointed as Team Leader who will have overall responsibility for the findings and recommendations of the Mission and for the submission of the Final Report at the specified time.

The team will be assisted by a consultant appointed by NORAD. His/her specific task will be to help integrate the findings of a parallel appraisal study of the NFPE IV sectoral programme with those of the institutional and organisation analysis.

All team members should have:

- An advanced degree in their appropriate field of specialisation
- At least ten years of relevant experience doing similar work
- Experience in South Asia, preferably in Bangladesh
- Experience in planning, monitoring, evaluating professional development programmes
- Ability to write clearly and analytically, and to be able to work to deadlines
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, plus the ability to work with senior management as well as being a team-player.

5. TIMING OF THE MISSION

It is expected that the Mission will start on 24 August 2003 and finish on September 2003. The Team Leader will ensure that all comments on the draft report made by BRAC and members of the donor consortium are addressed and that the report is finalised and delivered before he/she leaves the country.

6. REPORTING

The team will be given a formal briefing by BRAC and members of the donor consortium at the start of the Mission. They will also be provided with all documentation relevant to the analysis, including the HRD study completed in May 2002, and the Annual Financial Reviews and Business Strategy Review done for BRAC by Shorebank Advisory Services.

The consultants will make a formal presentation of their findings and recommendations to BRAC and the Donor Consortium on ... September 2003. A draft report incorporating comments made at the presentation will be submitted to the BRAC DLO on September 2003.

The final report will be submitted in 25 copies before the team leader leaves Bangladesh.

Annex 4: Report on the "open spaces" of 28-8 and 1-9**OPEN SPACE WORKSHOPS****Summary report****"How can BRAC better support education in communities"**

- an open reflection by a wide selection of stakeholders -
- August 28th and September 1st 2003 -

Open Space Workshops

Within the scope of the BRAC-BEP institutional and organizational analysis (August/September 2003) two open space workshops were held, one on grassroots level, and one on managerial level. The purpose of these large group interventions was to quickly retrieve (and share) information from BRAC stakeholders on issues as perceived important by them, in an open and inviting setting. BRAC managers, donors and consultants, determined the central theme for both workshops:

“How can BRAC better support education in communities”

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4. Conclusions

1. General principles of Open Space Technology

Open Space Technology is one way to enable all kinds of people, in any kind of organization, to create inspired meetings and events. Over the last 15 years, it has also become clear that opening space, as an intentional leadership practice, can create inspired organizations, where ordinary people work together to create extraordinary results with regularity. It is a way to stimulate and collect creative ideas and commitment, to generate a vision, to plan for the future or to develop a new product. It is a process of differentiation and integration (dependent on emphasis and focus).

In Open Space meetings, events and organizations, participants create and manage their own agenda of parallel working sessions around a central theme of strategic importance, such as: What is the strategy, group, organization or community that all stakeholders can support and work together to create?

With groups of 5 to 1000 -- working in one-day workshops, three-day conferences, or the regular weekly staff meeting -- the common result is a powerful, effective connecting and strengthening of what's already happening in the organization: planning and action, learning and doing, passion and responsibility, participation and performance.

We never know exactly what will happen when we open the space for people to do their work, but the following results can be guaranteed when any group gets into Open Space:

1. All of the issues that are most important to the participants, and that they feel comfortable enough to raise, will be put on the agenda
2. All of the issues raised will be addressed by those participants most qualified and capable of getting something done on each of them.
3. In a time as short as one or two days, all of the most important ideas, discussion, data, recommendations, conclusions, questions for further study, and suggestions for immediate action will be documented.
4. When appropriate, and when time is allowed for it, the total contents of this report document can be focused and prioritised in a matter of a few hours, even with very large groups.

General conditions wherein Open Space workshop is worthwhile considering are when the theme or issue is complex in nature, the group or people involved are highly diverse, there is an urgent question that need to be answered soon, there is potential conflict, no one has the right answer or solution to the problem.

2. Grassroots-level Open Space

Date: 28th August 2003

Venue: BRAC TARC Mymensingh

Participants: 65 persons, a.o. BRAC (graduate) students, parents, teachers (pre-primary, primary KK school and secondary), directors (adolescence program) and board of trustee members, and school-management-committee representatives, librarians.

2.1. Summary of outcomes and recommendations

Discussions focused mainly on programme related matters and a wide variety of issues were discussed and suggestions proposed. Issues indicated by (**) and (*) were considered to be of special importance by the group and are a reflection (rough indications) of where the group felt that priorities should be put. It should be noted, however, that time did not allow for extensive elaboration or analysis of all issues.

The following is a recapitulation of the outcomes of discussions as reported by working groups. This is slightly structured presentation of group reports only, i.e. without interpretation or analysis, giving an honest reflection of participants' opinions. The original reports (in Bangla) are available through BRAC head office.

Increase scope of programs

- Pre-primary and primary schools

It was indicated that in the villages the demand for education is much higher than the capacity of schools and the need is felt to increase the number of pre-primary and primary schools. Communities not only recognize the need for education but also highly appreciate the employment opportunities that are provided.

Although the aim of pre-primary schools is to prepare young children to enter class I of the formal system, it was proposed make provisions to enroll drop-outs of formal primary schools in BRAC NFP schools and sustain their continuous education.

- Primary education (towards secondary education)

To bridge the gap between BRAC primary schools and secondary schools and facilitate admission of BRAC students to secondary schools, it is deemed necessary to offer a programme that covers grade I to V. Also the difference in BRAC and government books and other materials would need consideration and it was even suggested to provide government books to the students (and train teachers in using these books). Also, graduating students are suggested to take part in the government scholarship exam. To further facilitate the access of BRAC graduates to high schools, BRAC is requested to arrange for scholarships or provide otherwise for sponsorships to students for their continued education.

- Secondary education (**)

A great need is felt to expand BRAC's pilot programme on capacity development of teachers in non-government secondary schools (98% of secondary schools are run by the community). More awareness building, training and monitoring is recommended for parents, teachers, head masters and school management committees. Also the supply of education materials, the establishment of libraries and the need to introduce (more) computer facilities were mentioned. It was implied that the weak secondary school system might be improved by establishing a BRAC-assisted quality improvement and supervision/monitoring system.

- Adult education

The idea of offering an adult education programme was proposed. This would promote social values, could lead to adults better appreciate education and motivate them to send their children to school. It was also pointed out that supervision of children should be part of the curriculum.

Improve infrastructure, facilities and materials

- School (constructions) (*)

Recommendations were made to establish permanent pre-primary and primary schools (constructions) in cooperation with local community and government authorities, and design a financing and management structure for these schools.

- Libraries (**)

Libraries were given significant attention. Indications were given that a library fulfills an important role in the community as a place where not only learning may take place, but they can also serve as a venue for social interaction and entertainment, as a link between children and adults, as a link to formal schools and even as a link to the wider civil society (through books and eventually through internet facilities).

- Materials and supplies (*)

It was suggested to provide the following materials to pre-primary schools: number chart, alphabet chart, nameplates and school bags for students. For primary and secondary schools it was suggested to distribute materials (books, khata, pens, etc.) free of charge, supply medical facilities and provide (other) facilities in BRAC schools similar to those in government schools.

Improve delivery of education

- English

Participants felt that the teachers' capacity to teach English language in primary school is inadequate. More intensive training (and follow-up) is required. Also, remarks were made about the lack of interest in the English language among community members and students, requiring conducting community workshops to change this situation.

- Exams

Recommendations relate to the standardization of exams (to be prepared by the team office) and training on preparation of examinations. Furthermore, some suggestions were made to motivate students by introducing more competition among students (and even provide prizes and stipends according to their performance) through annual exams.

Capacity building

- KK supervisors (*)

A special session was devoted to the training needs for KK supervisors and members, to improve KK centres. The following ideas for skill development were put forward: sewing, computer literacy, photography, tel/fax operation, healthcare, fisheries, nursery, poultry farming, vegetable farming, legal care, and beauty parlour.

- Guardians and parents

The issues related to the payment of 5 taka for pre-primary education was discussed. It was suggested that some guardians don't send their children to school because of this expense. The fact that for some students the payment is waived, and that a stipend is given to primary school students further blur the issue. To resolve the matter it is proposed to make education free for all.

A number of measures were further proposed to increase awareness of parents and guardians, through semi-annual workshops, activities in the library, education of illiterates and financial support.

2.2. Remarks and cross-cutting issues

Observations regarding the Open Space group reports

1. Many ideas on program level were raised and a limited number of suggestions on organizational/institutional level. The fact that participants had their attention mainly on program matters is an indication that in general the organizational performance of BRAC is perceived as good!! (In other words, if the organisational support to the programmes were poor, participants would undoubtedly have raised more issues relating to the organization). In general the perception is that people have great confidence in BRAC's capability to deliver.
2. Although BRAC pays much attention to awareness building in communities (and among guardians and parents), comments from participants make it clear that there is a continuous need to support these types of activities. Although acceptance of BRAC programs in the communities is most often achieved, the situation remains fragile as long as the new social values are not fully integrated in local and national culture.
3. Training of teachers is understandably a strong point of attention, as the scope and duration of teachers' training programs is very limited. Many remarks were made about the need for further training for all involved in teaching programs.

4. Interestingly, many participants were well aware of the importance to cooperate with and/or involve government to sustain the operations of the schools. For the establishment of permanent schools, for distribution of materials, for student scholarships and for alignment of schoolbooks and other teaching materials and for examinations suggestions were made to look at BRAC to more intensely work with government (and vice versa).

General observations regarding the Open Space workshop process

5. Participants were very disciplined in following the indicated programme and time schedule. Just before 9:00 am (start of the programme) all participants had taken their seats. After breaks and lunch the programme could resume as scheduled. Not a single participant had left after lunch and all actively participated until the end of the day. This behavior is remarkable and rarely encountered by the Dutch facilitators (including The Netherlands).
6. Participants showed a great level of involvement. Although the process was slightly hampered by the language barrier (the translator did a wonderful job), the participants conceived the principles of Open Space well. This is among others reflected in the great number of issues that was raised, and indication for active thinking and ownership. The young teachers displayed a high level of self-esteem and self-confidence and spoke out enthusiastically in front of the entire group.

3. Managerial-level Open Space

Date: 1st September 2003

Venue: BCDM Rajendrapur

Participants: 65 persons, a.o. BRAC regional and area managers, NGO partners, BRAC head office staff and donors

3.1. Summary of findings and recommendations

The participants in the workshop in Rajendrapur participated with enthusiasm, and expressed their appreciation of the methodology and outcome. Participants explored the problems underlying their perceptions and recommendations. Again many issues were programme related, although more organization-related matters were brought forward. The original session reports are available with BRAC (and are of great interest for project decisions). We summarize here only the main findings, either from programme or organisational perspective. Issues indicated by (**) and (*) were considered to be of special importance by the group and are a reflection (rough indications) of where the group felt that priorities should be put. It should be noted, however, that time did not allow for extensive elaboration or analysis of all issues.

Improve institutional cooperation GoB – BRAC and NGO - BRAC

- NGOs network (**)

Participants considered of great importance to strengthen its partnerships with NGOs in remote areas to improve its educational programs in remote areas through its NGO network. Aside from cost-effectiveness through such a decentralized offering of programs, ethnic minorities can be reached, which would otherwise be refrained from education. Small NGOs expect a well-communicated rationalized selection of NGOs and schools. BRAC funding is expected to achieve their targets.

- Cooperation with GoB (**)

A number of practical suggestions were made to align BRAC programs with GoB programs. Among them was a prime concern of the delivery of primary education to all children in Bangladesh and set-up a primary education expansion program with GoB. Also the strengthening of secondary education and the expansion of pre-primary education and ADP by improved linkage with GoB were suggested.

The GoB's lack of training capacity was pointed out. Even for staff training it was suggested to share training opportunities with GoB, including teachers, librarians and school managers.

Improve management of BRAC-BEP

- Cost-effectiveness

The continuity of BEP was questioned, considering its high dependency on donor-support and it was recommended as another urgent reason to intensify the dialogue with government. It was suggested to enter into a dialogue with a large group of officials as plan accordingly with important stakeholders.

Also suggestions were made to experiment with trust fund and other models for the self-sustainability of BEP, not aiming to achieve commercial education, but to strengthen community involvement. Experiences with ESP, libraries and PRIME secondary schools are valuable in this regard.

- Decision-making and responsibilities

It was pointed out that there is no clear (or at least a complicated) delineation of tasks and responsibilities in the BRAC hierarchy, especially in the field. This results in overlapping of tasks/responsibilities. It is recommended to clarify this issue by decentralizing authority and clear leadership responsibilities on decentralized level. Also, it was suggested to create forums for interaction and open up for higher participation in policy and decision making processes.

Also suggestions were made to involve ESP staff more intensely in materials development and distribution, and the design of training modules.

- Computerization of regional offices

Equipping the ROs with computer facilities would enable RMs to process information more efficient, maintain small MIS, exchange and share information with colleagues and head office and link to the Internet to collect new ideas and information.

- Staff recruitment, evaluation and training (*)

Participants perceive the recruitment and promotion process as not fully transparent and fair.. Levels should further be based on the person's intelligence and performance.

The absence of a clear, individual staff development plans was discussed. There is no link between individual staff competencies, job requirements (as job descriptions mainly describe skills and activities, rather than competencies) and performance evaluations (which follows standard criteria for all levels and positions of employees). Until recently staff performance assessments were not fed back to the staff assessed which was perceived as problematic.

- Staff interaction

The need was expressed to intensify staff interaction by organizing forums whereby staff from various levels and regions can meet and learn. It was proposed to do this once/twice per year by Open Space Technology.

- Staff salaries (**)

An important issue for the participants is the salary that staff and teachers receive. It is found too low and suggestions were made to change the salary structure, whereby aspects such as location and competitiveness should be considered.

Increase scope of programs

- Pre-primary schools (**)

In collaboration with GoB, it was recommended to expand the pre-primary school programme and include the remote areas of the country. Important is to consider where government schools are operating. The schools serve as a bridge between home/community-life and education. It was also seen that pre-primary education strengthens the relationship GoB-NGOs as GoB primary schools would benefit.

- Secondary schools (**)

It was proposed that various efforts be made to strengthen the capacity of secondary schools and improving the poor quality and managerial skills of these schools: improve subject knowledge (math, English, science), management capacity of head masters, SMCs, and increase awareness through community involvement, PTA participation, gender awareness.

- Ethnic minorities

It was suggested to (further) design special programs for ethnic minority groups, preceded by an extensive survey, a needs assessment and advocacy campaign.

- Adolescents development program (*)

ADP is perceived as a successful component that should be extended geographically, a.o. into ethnic minority areas. It was also suggested that community participation should be enhanced.

Improve infrastructure, facilities and materials

- Libraries (*)

It was pointed out that there is need to establish more community libraries. They facilitate social-cultural life of the people and serve as centers for socialization. They guarantee a continuing of newly acquired literacy for graduates.

- Computer aids

The need to provide computers as learning aids to GPs and secondary schools was suggested.

Capacity building

- Awareness programs

In many groups the importance of awareness programs for parents, community members and children themselves were stressed, to guarantee a success of educational programs.

- SMC (*)

The need was identified for better school management. Training and guidance of SMC members was therefore recommended, as well as interaction of SMC members of various upazilla's to share experiences and ideas. This would assist in planning and monitoring. Cooperation with GoB was suggested to initiate such interventions and improve management and operation of schools.

3.2. Remarks and cross-cutting issues

1. In many groups recommendations were made to intensify the ties with GoB as a vehicle to expand programs and impact, improve quality, but also as mean to achieve sustainability for BEP. There is apparently an increasing pressure and understanding that the future of education in Bangladesh depends on the relationship with GoB.